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THE ELECTRA

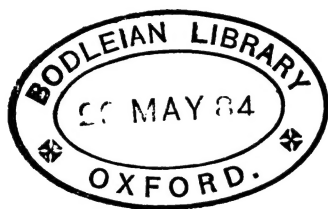
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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Κλυταιμνήστρα, queen of Argos.

Ὀρέστης, son of Agamemnon and Clytaemnestra.

Ἡλέκτρα, his sister.

Αἰτουργός ('a husbandman'), married to Electra.

Πρεσβύς ('old man'), servant of Electra, who had  
tended her as a child.

Ἄγγελος ('a messenger').

Πυλάδης, the friend of Orestes, who appears on the  
stage, but does not speak.

*Chorus of Argive maidens, singing usually in the orchestra below  
the stage, but mounting the stage itself when the action requires it.*

*The scene is a rustic cottage in Argolis, and is the same all  
through the play.*



## PREFACE.

THE ELECTRA is one of the strongest and most instructive examples of the *realism* of EURIPIDES. His object was to excite interest, not by distant grandeur like AESCHYLUS, nor by ideals however touching and poetic like SOPHOCLES, but by bringing real men and women on the stage, with real human passions and feelings, as his countrymen saw them every day in Athens. The strong side of this realism is clearly the 'touch of nature;' the weak side is the danger of its losing all effect by becoming commonplace and undignified. This play has passages which illustrate both tendencies.

There are many delicate touches of natural feeling, many striking displays of passion; the recognition of ORESTES, though inferior to that in the IPHIGENIA, is full of beauties; and the curse of AEGISTHUS is very finely written. On the other hand, there is something repulsive in the incongruity of ELECTRA being married to a farm labourer; all the characters, from time to time, talk in a commonplace strain; and the satire on AESCHYLUS in the fourth scene is both unworthy and irrelevant. But, on the whole, the play has been rather too hardly treated by the critics.

The plot is as follows:—

CLYTAEMNESTRA, having treacherously murdered her husband, AGAMEMNON, on his return from Troy, has married her lover AEGISTHUS, and rules Argolis from the palace at Mycenae. ORESTES is in foreign lands; and ELECTRA, whose love for her father might be awkward, is safely married to a poor but noble-minded tiller of the soil. All seems well for the queen.

But ORESTES returns, bidden by the Delphic oracle to slay

## *PREFACE.*

her. He and PYLADES reach Argolis (and the cottage of ELECTRA, though they know it not,) at daybreak. Here the play opens with ORESTES' short address to PYLADES, announcing his night-visit to his father's tomb, and his purpose. [Scene 1.]

ELECTRA discovers the two travellers lurking near her cottage, and at first she takes them for thieves. ORESTES, however, informs her that he brings news of her brother, and inquires after her. She joyfully tells him all her case, and plans of vengeance, which he promises to report. [Scene 2.]

The husband of ELECTRA returns, and hearing who the strangers are, courteously invites them in. ORESTES warmly admires virtue in such humble rank. [Scene 3.]

An old servant of the family arrives with some provisions, and tells her that some one has been visiting her father's tomb. Presently ORESTES and PYLADES come in, and the old man recognises the former. [Scene 4.]

The brother and sister now contrive their plot. [Scene 5.]

AEGISTHUS is slain by ORESTES under pretence of joining in the sacrifice which the former is celebrating. [Scene 6.]

ORESTES returns to his sister with the body, having revealed his real name to the Argives. ELECTRA utters her famous curse against the dead man. [Scene 7.]

CLYTAEMNESTRA, in answer to an appeal from ELECTRA, who asks her to come as she has recently given birth to a child, visits the cottage in state. There (behind the scenes) she is murdered, and the scene is then shifted, showing the brother and sister standing over the corpses of the guilty pair. [Scene 8.]

## SCENE I.

### THE RETURN OF ORESTES.

*The cottage where ELECTRA and her husband live, in a rural district of Argolis. The stream Inachus is seen in the background, and over the hills behind the day is breaking. The ground slopes steeply down with rude steps at the sides, from the higher level of the stage to the lower level of the orchestra.*

*Enter ORESTES and PYLADES, girt with swords, in the guise of way-worn travellers, with luggage on their backs. They stop as they are approaching the cottage and put down their baggage, and ORESTES turns to his friend and says :—*

OP. Πυλάδῃ, σὲ γὰρ δὴ πρῶτον ἀνθρώπων ἐγὼ  
 πιστὸν νομίζω καὶ φίλον ξένον τ' ἐμοί·  
 μόνος δ' Ὀρέστην τόνδ' ἐθαύμαζες φίλων,  
 πράσσονθ' ἃ πράσσω δειν' ὑπ' Αἰγίσθου παθών,  
 ὅς μου κατέκτα πατέρα χῆ πανώλεθρος 5  
 μήτηρ. ἀφίγμαι δ' ἐκ θεοῦ μυστηρίων  
 Ἀργεῖον οὐδας, οὐδενὸς ξυνειδότος,  
 [fiercely] φόνον φονεῦσι πατρὸς ἀλλάξων ἐμοῦ.  
 νυκτὸς δὲ τῆσδε πρὸς τάφον μολὼν πατρὸς  
 δάκρυά τ' ἔδωκα καὶ κόμης ἀπηρξάμην 10  
 πυρᾷ τ' ἐπέσφαξ' αἶμα μηλείου φόνου  
 λαθὼν τυράννουσ οἱ κρατοῦσι τῆσδε γῆς.  
 καὶ τειχέων μὲν ἐντὸς οὐ βαίνω πόδα,

# THE ELECTRA OF

δυοῖν δ' ἀμιλλαν ξυντιθεῖς ἀφικόμην πρὸς τέρμονας γῆς τῆσδ', ἔν' ἐκβάλω ποδὶ ἄλλην ἐπ' αἶαν, εἰ μέ τις γνοίῃ σκοπῶν ζητοῦντ' ἀδελφήν, (φασὶ γάρ νιν ἐν γάμοις ζευχθεῖσαν οἰκεῖν, οὐδὲ παρθένον μένειν,) ὥς συγγένωμαι καὶ φόνου συνεργάτιν λαβὼν τά γ' εἴσω τειχέων σαφῶς μάθω. [gazing at the sunrise in the east]	15       20
νῦν οὖν, Ἔως γὰρ λευκὸν ὄμμ' ἀναίρεται, ἔξω τρίβου τοῦδ' ἵχνος ἀλλαξώμεθα. ἢ γάρ τις ἀροτῆρ ἢ τις οἰκέτις γυνή φανήσεται νῦν, ἦντιν' ἱστορήσομεν εἰ τούσδε ναίει σύγγονος τόπους ἐμή. [They retire aside out of the path, and sit down.]	25

## EURIPIDES.

### SCENE II.

#### ORESTES AND ELECTRA.

*The same. ORESTES and PYLADES seated at a little distance from the path, not clearly in view.*

*The CHORUS of Argeian maidens are in the orchestra, and ELECTRA is singing a song to them from the stage about herself and her sorrows. Suddenly she chances to catch sight of ORESTES and PYLADES, who from their retired spot are listening intently to her song.*

*ELECTRA is dressed in the commonest and coarsest garb of a labourer's wife.*

*She starts back; then recovering herself, she says, in a (hurried) tone of fear, pointing at the two figures:—*

ΗΛ. οἴμοι, γυναῖκες· ἐξέβην θρηνημάτων  
ξένοι τινὲς παρ' οἶκον οἷδ' ἐφεστίους  
εὐνὰς ἔχοντες ἐξανίστανται λόχου·  
φυγῇ, σὺ μὲν κατ' οἶμον, ἐς δόμους δ' ἐγώ,  
φῶτας κακούργους ἐξαλύξωμεν ποδί. 30

*[she rushes off toward the cottage, but ORESTES and PYLADES intercept her]*

ΟΡ. μέν', ὦ τάλαινα· μὴ τρέσης ἐμήν χέρα.

ΗΛ. ὦ Φοῖβ' Ἀπολλων, προσπίτνω σε μὴ θανεῖν.

*[falling on her knees]*

ΟΡ. ἄλλους κτάνοιμ' ἂν μάλλον ἐχθίους σέθεν.

ΗΛ. *[struggling]* ἀπελθε, μὴ ψαῦ' ὦν σε μὴ ψαύειν χρεών.

ΟΡ. οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅτου θίγοιμ' ἂν ἐνδικώτερον. 35



THE ELECTRA OF ·

ΗΛ. [*pointing to his sword*]

καὶ πῶς ξιφήρης πρὸς δόμοις λοχῆς ἐμέ ;

ΟΡ. μέλινας ἀκουσον, καὶ τάχ' οὐκ ἄλλως ἐρεῖς.

ΗΛ. [*humbly*] ἔστηκα· πάντως δ' εἰμὶ σή· κρείσσων γὰρ εἶ.

ΟΡ. [*releasing her*] ἦκω φέρων σοι σοῦ κασιγνήτου λόγους.

ΗΛ. [*in delight*] ὦ φίλτατ', ἄρα ζῶντος, ἢ τεθνηκότος ; 40

ΟΡ. ζῇ· πρῶτα γάρ σοι τὰγάθ' ἀγγέλλειν θέλω.

ΗΛ. [*passionately joyful*]

εὐδαίμονόης, μισθὸν ἡδίστων λόγων.

ΟΡ. κοινῇ δίδωμι τοῦτο νῦν ἀμφοῖν ἔχειν.

ΗΛ. λόγον δὲ δὴ τιν' ἤλθες ἐκ κείνου φέρων ;

ΟΡ. εἰ ζῆς, ὅπως τε ζῶσα συμφορᾶς ἔχεις. 45

ΗΛ. οὐκουν ὀρᾶς μου πρῶτον ὥς ξηρὸν δέμας ;

ΟΡ. [*with pity*] λύπαις γε συντετηκός, ὥστε με στένειν.

ΗΛ. καὶ κρᾶτα πλόκαμόν τ' ἐσκυθισμένον ξυρῶ.

ΟΡ. δάκνει σ' ἀδελφὸς ὃ τε θανὼν ἴσως πατήρ ;

ΗΛ. οἴμοι, τί γάρ μοι τῶνδ' ἐστὶ φίλτερον ; 50

ΟΡ. [*sympathetically*]

φεῦ φεῦ· τί δαὶ σὺ σῶ κασιγνήτῳ δοκεῖς ;

ΗΛ. ἀπὼν ἐκεῖνος, οὐ παρὼν ἡμῖν φίλος.

ΟΡ. [*glancing at the cottage*]

ἐκ τοῦ δὲ ναεῖς ἐνθάδ' ἄστεως ἐκάς ;

ΗΛ. ἐγημάμεσθ', ὦ ξεῖνε, θανάσιμον γάμον.

ΟΡ. [*sighing*]

ῥῆμαξ' ἀδελφὸν σόν. Μυκηναίων τινί ;

55

ΗΛ. οὐχ ὥς πατήρ μ' ἤλπιζεν ἐκδώσειν ποτέ.

ΟΡ. εἰφ', ὥς ἀκούσας σῶ κασιγνήτῳ λέγω.

ΗΛ. ἐν τοῖσδ' ἐκείνου τηλορὸς ναίω δόμοις.

EURIPIDES.

- OP. [*with a touch of contempt*]  
σκαφεύς τις ἢ βουφορβὸς ἄξιος δόμων.
- HA. πένης ἀνὴρ γενναῖος ἔς τέ μ' εὖσεβής. 60
- OP. μήτηρ δέ σ' ἡ τεκοῦσα ταῦτ' ἠνέσχετο;
- HA. [*sadly*] γυναικες ἀνδρῶν, ὧ ξέν', οὐ παίδων, φίλαι.
- OP. τίνος δέ σ' οὐνεχ' ὕβρισ' Αἰγισθος τάδε;
- HA. τεκεῖν μ' ἐβούλετ' ἀσθεινῇ, τοιῶδε δούς.
- OP. ὥς παῖδα δῆθεν μὴ τέκοις ποινάτορα; 65
- HA. [*vindictively*] τοιαῦτ' ἐβούλευσ', ὦν ἐμοὶ δοίῃ δίκην.
- OP. τί δῆτ' Ὀρέστης πρὸς τὰδ', Ἄργος ἦν μόλη;
- HA. [*surprised*]  
ῆρου τόδ'; αἰσχρόν γ' εἶπας· οὐ γὰρ νῦν ἀκμή;
- OP. ἐλθὼν δὲ δὴ πῶς φονέας ἂν κτάνοι πατρός;
- HA. [*decisively*]  
τολμῶν, ὑπ' ἐχθρῶν οἷ' ἐτολμήθη πατήρ. 70
- OP. ἦ καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ μητέρ' ἂν τλαίης κτανεῖν;
- HA. ταῦτῳ γε πελέκει τῷ πατὴρ ἀπώλετο.
- OP. [*eagerly*] λέγω τὰδ' αὐτῷ, καὶ βέβαια τὰπὸ σοῦ;
- HA. θάνοιμι μητρὸς αἵμ' ἐπισφάξας' ἐμῆς.
- OP. φεῦ· [*controlling his excitement*]  
εἶθ' ἦν Ὀρέστης πλησίον κλύων τάδε. 75
- HA. ἀλλ', ὧ ξέν', οὐ γνώην ἂν εἰσιδοῦσά νιν.
- OP. νέα γὰρ, οὐδὲν θαῦμ', ἀπεξεύχης νέου.
- HA. εἰς ἂν μόνος νιν τῶν ἐμῶν γνώη φίλων.
- OP. ἄρ' ὃν λέγουσιν αὐτὸν ἐκκλέψαι φόνου;
- HA. πατρός γε παιδαγωγὸς ἀρχαῖος γέρων. 80
- OP. ὁ καπθανὼν δὲ γὼς πατὴρ τύμβου κυρεῖ;
- HA. [*darkly*] ἔκυρσεν ὥς ἔκυρσεν, ἐκβληθεὶς δόμῳ.

## THE ELECTRA OF

OP. [*in horror*] οἵμοι, τόδ' οἶον εἶπας.

[*controlling himself*] αἰσθησις γὰρ οὖν

καὶ τῶν θυραίων πημάτων δάκνει βροτούς.

λέξον δ', ἦν' εἰδὼς σῶ κασιγνήτῳ φέρω 85

λόγους ἀτερπεῖς, ἀλλ' ἀναγκαίους κλύειν.

HΛ. [*resolved*] λέγοιμ' ἂν, εἰ χρή. χρή δὲ πρὸς φίλον λέγειν

τύχας βαρείας τὰς ἐμὰς κάμοῦ πατρός.

ἐπεὶ δὲ κινεῖς μῦθον, ἱκετεύω, ξένε,

ἄγγελ' Ὀρέστη τὰμὰ κακείνου κακὰ, 90

[*with a piteous glance down at her dress*]

πρῶτον μὲν οἷοις ἐν πέπλοις αὐλίζομαι,

πῖνφ θ' ὄσφ βέβριθ', ὑπὸ στέγασί τε

οἶαισι ναῖω βασιλικῶν ἐκ δωμάτων,

αὐτὴ μὲν ἐκμοχθοῦσα κερκίσιν πέπλους,

ἢ γυμνὸν ἔξω σῶμα καὶ στερήσομαι, 95

αὐτὴ δὲ πηγὰς ποταμίους φορουμένη,

ἀνέορτος ἱρῶν καὶ χορῶν τητωμένη.

[*scornfully*] μήτηρ δ' ἐμὴ Φρυγίοισιν ἐν σκυλεύμασι

θρόνῳ κάθηται, πρὸς δ' ἔδρας Ἀσιάτιδες

δμῳαὶ στατίζουσ', ὧς ἔπερσ' ἐμὸς πατήρ, 100

Ἰδαῖα φάρη χρυσέαις ἐζευγμέναι

πόρπαισι.

[*with indignant solemnity*] αἷμα δ' ἔτι πατρός κατὰ στέγας

μέλαν σέσηπεν· ὧς δ' ἐκείνον ἔκτανεν,

ἐς ταῦτ' ἀλύνων ἄρματ' ἐκφοιτᾷ πατρί,

καὶ σκῆπτρ', ἐν οἷς Ἑλλησιν ἐστρατηλάτει, 105

μαιφόνοισι χερσὶ γαυροῦται λαβών.

Ἀγαμέμνονος δὲ τύμβος ἡτμισσμένος,

EURIPIDES.

οὐπω χοάς ποτ' οὐδὲ κλῶνα μυρσίνης  
 ἔλαβε, πυρὰ δὲ χέρσος ἀγλαΐσμάτων.  
 μέθῃ δὲ βρεχθεὶς τῆς ἐμῆς μητρὸς πόσις, 110  
 [bitterly] ὁ κλεινός, ὡς λέγουσιν, ἐνθρόσκει τάφῳ,  
 πέτροις τε λεύει μνήμα λάϊνον πατρός,  
 καὶ τοῦτο τολμᾷ τοῦπος εἰς ἡμᾶς λέγειν  
 ποῦ παῖς Ὀρέστης; ἄρά σοι τύμβῳ καλῶς  
 παρὼν ἀμύνει; ταῦτ' ἀπὼν ὑβρίζεται. 115  
 [pausing at the climax of her passion and indignation;  
 then turning to ORESTES, earnestly]  
 ἀλλ', ὦ ξέν', ἱκετεύω σ', ἀπάγγελον τάδε.  
 [clasping her hands]  
 πολλοὶ δ' ἐπιστέλλουσιν, ἐρμηνεὺς δ' ἐγώ,  
 αἱ χεῖρες, ἡ γλῶσσ', ἡ ταλαίπωρός τε φρὴν  
 κára τ' ἐμὸν ξυρήκες ὃ τ' ἐκείνου τεκών.  
 αἰσχρόν γάρ, εἰ πατὴρ μὲν ἐξείλεν Φρύγας, 120  
 ὃ δ' ἄνδρ' ἔν' εἰς ὧν οὐ δυνήσεται κτανεῖν,  
 νέος πεφυκὼς καὶ ἀμείνωνος πατρός.  
 [she turns to him in eager appeal.]

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### SCENE III.

#### THE HUSBANDMAN.

ELECTRA is standing before ORESTES and PYLADES with clasped hands and eager air of entreaty. ORESTES is moved, but silent.

Suddenly enter the husbandman (to whom ELECTRA is married). When he catches sight of the group he stops short, rather surprised and hurt.

Then he turns to ELECTRA and says, with an injured air, pointing at ORESTES and PYLADES:—

ΑΥ. ξα· τίνας τούσδ' ἐν πύλαις ὀρῶ ξένους ;  
τίνος δ' ἔκατι τάσδ' ἐπ' ἀγραύλους πύλας  
προσῆλθον ; ἡ 'μοῦ δεόμενοι ; γυναικί τοι 125  
αἰσχρὸν μετ' ἀνδρῶν ἐστάναι νεανιῶν.

ΗΛ. [sweetly] ὦ φίλτατ', εἰς ὑποπτα μὴ μόλῃς ἐμοί.  
τὸν ὄντα δ' εἴσει μῦθον· οἶδε γὰρ ξένοι  
ἤκουσ' Ὀρέστου πρὸς με κήρυκες λόγων.  
[turning to ORESTES and PYLADES]  
ἀλλ', ὦ ξένοι, σύγγνωτε τοῖς εἰρημένοις. 130

ΑΥ. [surprised] τί φασίν ; ἀνὴρ ἔστι καὶ λεύσσει φάος ;

ΗΛ. ἔστιν λόγῳ γοῦν· φασὶ δ' οὐκ ἄπιστ' ἐμοί.

ΑΥ. ἡ καί τι πατρὸς σῶν τε μέμνηται κακῶν ;

ΗΛ. ἐν ἐλπίσιν ταῦτ'· ἀσθενὴς φεύγων ἀνὴρ.

ΑΥ. ἦλθον δ' Ὀρέστου τίν' ἀγορεύοντες λόγον ; 135

ΗΛ. σκοποὺς ἔπεμψε τούσδε τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν.

ΑΥ. οὐκοῦν τὰ μὲν λεύσσουσι, τὰ δὲ σύ που λέγεις.

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ΗΛ. ἴσασι, οὐδὲν τῶνδ' ἔχουσιν ἐνδεές.

ΑΤ. [*heartily*] οὐκοῦν πάλαι χρῆν τοῖσδ' ἀνεπύχθαι πύλας.

[*to ORESTES and PYLADES*]

χωρεῖτ' ἐς οἴκους· ἀντὶ γὰρ χρηστῶν λόγων 140

ξενίων κυρήσεθ', οἷ' ἐμὸς κεύθει δόμος.

[*to the attendants in the house*]

αἴρεσθ', ὁπαδοί, τῶνδ' ἔσω τεύχη δόμων·

[*to ORESTES and PYLADES*]

καὶ μηδὲν ἀντεῖπητε, παρὰ φίλου φίλοι  
μολόντες ἀνδρός· καὶ γὰρ εἰ πένης ἔφυν,

οὔτοι τό γ' ἦθος δυσγενὲς παρέξομαι. 145

[*attendants come out and take in the luggage*]

ΟΡ. [*after a pause, during which he gazes admiringly at the*

*Husbandman as he retreats into the cottage*] φεῦ·

οὐκ ἔστ' ἀκριβὲς οὐδὲν εἰς εὐάνδριαν·

ἔχουσι γὰρ ταραγμὸν αἱ φύσεις βροτῶν.

ἤδη γὰρ εἶδον ἄνδρα γενναίου πατρὸς

τὸ μηδὲν ὄντα, χρηστά τ' ἐκ κακῶν τέκνα,

λιμόν τ' ἐν ἀνδρὸς πλουσίου φρονήματι, 150

γνώμην τε μεγάλην ἐν πένητι σώματι.

[*reflecting*] πῶς οὖν τις αὐτὰ διαλαβὼν ὀρθῶς κρινεῖ;

πλούτῳ; [*shaking his head*] πονηρῷ τᾶρα χρήσεται κριτῇ·

ἢ τοῖς ἔχουσι μηδέν; [*doubtfully*] ἀλλ' ἔχει νόσον

περία, διδάσκει δ' ἄνδρα τῇ χρεῖα κακόν. 155

ἀλλ' εἰς ὅπλ' ἔλθω; τίς δὲ πρὸς λόγχην βλέπων

μάρτυς γένοιτ' ἂν ὅστις ἐστὶν ἀγαθός;

κράτιστον εἰκῇ ταῦτ' ἔαν ἀφειμένα.

αὐτος γὰρ ἀνὴρ οὗτ' ἐν Ἀργείοις μέγας

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οὐτ' αὖ δοκήσει δωμάτων ὠγκωμένος, 160

ἐν τοῖς δὲ πολλοῖς ὦν, ἄριστος ἡρέεθι.

[with indignation and contempt]

οὐ μὴ 'φρονήσῃθ', οἱ κενῶν δοξασμάτων

πλήρεις πλανᾶσθε, τῇ δ' ὀμιλίᾳ βροτοῦς

κρινεῖτε καὶ τοῖς ἤθεσιν τοὺς εὐγενεῖς ;

οἱ γὰρ τοιοῦτοι τὰς πόλεις οἰκοῦσιν εὖ 165

καὶ δώμαθ', αἱ δὲ σάρκες αἱ κεναὶ φρενῶν

ἀγάλματ' ἀγορᾶς εἰσίν. οὐδὲ γὰρ δόρυ

μᾶλλον βραχίων σθεναρὸς ἀσθενοῦς μένει·

ἐν τῇ φύσει δὲ τοῦτο κὰν εὐψυχία.

[after a pause, turning to ELECTRA]

αἰνῶ μὲν οὖν τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς ἐσδοχὰς δόμων· 170

ἐβουλόμην δ' ἄν, εἰ κασίγνητός με σὸς

εἰς εὐτυχούντας ἤγεν εὐτυχῶν δόμοις.

ἴσως δ' ἂν ἔλθοι· Λοξίου γὰρ ἔμπεδοι

χρησμοί, βροτῶν δὲ μαντικὴν χαίρειν ἔω.

[ELECTRA leads the way into the cottage; ORESTES and  
PYLADES follow.]

## EURIPIDES.

### SCENE IV.

#### THE RECOGNITION.

*The stage is empty. An old man in a tattered garment appears in the orchestra, approaching the steps which lead up to the stage. He carries a stuff, and a basket of provisions, containing meat, cheeses, and wine.*

*He looks about for ELECTRA, and then proceeds slowly to mount the steps.*

ΠΡ. ποῦ ποῦ νεᾶνις πότνι' ἐμῇ δέσποινά τε, 175

Ἄγαμέμνονος παῖς, ἣν ποτ' ἐξέθρεψ' ἐγώ;

[*resting a moment*]

ὥς πρόσβασιν τῶνδ' ὀρθίαν οἴκων ἔχει

ῥυσφ' γέροντι τῷδε προσβῆναι ποδί.

ὅμως δὲ πρὸς γε τοὺς φίλους ἐξελκτέον

διπλὴν ἄκανθαν καὶ παλίρροπον γόνυ. 180

[*He climbs resolutely but wearily to the top, and meets ELECTRA coming out of the cottage.*]

ὦ θύγατερ, ἄρτι γάρ σε πρὸς δόμοις ὄρῳ,

ἦκω φέρων σοι ταῦτα, τοῖς ξένοις βοράν.

[*he gives her the cheeses, wine, &c.*]

[*wiping his eyes with his tattered robe*]

ἐγὼ δὲ τρύχει τῷδ' ἐμῶν πέπλων κόρας

δακρύοισι τέγξας ἐξομόρξασθαι θέλω.

ΗΛ. [*in a tone of pity*]

τί δ', ὦ γεραιέ, διάβροχον τόδ' ὅμμ' ἔχεις; 185

μῶν τὰμὰ διὰ χρόνον σ' ἀνέμνησεν κακὰ;



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ἢ τὰς Ὀρέστου τλήμονας φυγὰς στένεις  
καὶ πατέρα τὸν ἐμόν, ὃν ποτ' ἐν χεροῖν ἔχων  
ἀνόνητ' ἔθρεψας σοὶ τε καὶ τοῖς σοῖς φίλοις;

ΠΡ. [*sadly*]

ἀνόνηθ'· ὅμως δ' οὖν τοῦτό γ' οὐκ ἠνεσχόμην. 190

ἦλθον γὰρ αὐτοῦ πρὸς τάφον, πάρεργ' ὁδοῦ,  
καὶ προσπεσὼν ἔκλαυσ', ἐρημίας τυχών,  
σπονδὰς τε, λύσας ἀσκὸν ὃν φέρω ξένοις,  
ἔσπεισα, τύμβῳ δ' ἀμφέβηκα μυρσίνας.

— πυρᾶς δ' ἐπ' αὐτῆς οἷν μελάγχμιον πόκῳ 195

σφάγιον ἐσεῖδον αἱμά τ' οὐ πάλαι χυθὲν  
ξανθῆς τε χαίτης βοστρύχους κεκαρμένους.  
κάθαύμας', ὦ παῖ, τίς ποτ' ἀνθρώπων ἔτλη  
πρὸς τύμβον ἐλθεῖν· οὐ γὰρ Ἀργείων γέ τις.

[*eagerly*]

ἀλλ' ἦλθ' ἴσως πού σὸς κασίγνητος λάθρα, 200

μολῶν δ' ἐθαύμας' ἄθλιον τύμβον πατρός.

[*pulling from his garment a lock of hair*]

σκέψαι δὲ χαίτην, προστιθεῖσα σῇ κόμῃ,  
εἰ χρῶμα ταῦτ' οὐκ οὐρίμης ἔσται τριχός.

φιλεῖ γὰρ, αἷμα ταῦτόν οἱς ἂν ᾗ πατρός,

τὰ πόλλ' ὅμοια σώματος πεφυκέναι. 205

ΗΔ. [*surprised, and rather scornful*]

οὐκ ἄξι' ἀνδρός, ὦ γέρον, σοφοῦ λέγεις,  
εἰ κρυπτὸν ἐς γῆν τήνδ' ἂν Αἰγίσθου φόβῳ  
δοκεῖς ἀδελφὸν τὸν ἐμόν εὐθαρσῇ μολεῖν.

ἔπειτα χαίτης πῶς συνόλεται πλόκος;

ὁ μὲν παλαίστραις ἀνδρὸς ἐθγενοῦς τραφεῖς, 210

ὁ δὲ κτενισμοῖς θῆλυς· ἀλλ' ἀμήχανον. [*abruptly.*]

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- πολλοῖς δ' ἂν εὖροις βοστρύχους ὁμοπτέρους  
καὶ μὴ γεγῶσιν αἵματες ταύτου, γέρον.
- ΠΡ. σὺ δ' εἰς ἶχνος βᾶσ' ἀρβύλης σκέφαι βάσιν,  
εἰ σύμμετρος σῶ ποδὶ γενήσεται, τέκνον. 215
- ΗΛ. πῶς δ' ἂν γένοιτ' ἂν ἐν κραταιλέφ πέδῳ  
γαίας ποδῶν ἔκμακτρον; εἰ δ' ἔστιν τόδε,  
δυοῖν ἀδελφοῖν πούς ἂν οὐ γένοιτ' ἴσος  
ἀνδρός τε καὶ γυναικός, ἀλλ' ἄρσην κρατεῖ.
- ΠΡ. [after a slight pause]  
οἱ δὲ ξένοι ποῦ; βούλομαι γὰρ εἰσιδῶν 220  
αὐτοὺς ἐρέσθαι σοῦ κασιγνήτου πέρι.  
[Enter ORESTES and PYLADES from the house; ELECTRA  
turns and sees them.]
- ΗΛ. οἷδ' ἐκ δόμων βαίνουσι λαιψηρῶ ποδί.
- ΟΡ. [greeting the old man] χαῖρ', ὦ γεραιέ.  
[drawing ELECTRA aside] τοῦ ποτ', Ἥλέκτρα, τόδε  
παλαιὸν ἀνδρὸς λείψανον φίλων κυρεῖ;  
ΗΛ. οὗτος τὸν ἀμὸν πατέρ' ἔθρεψεν, ὦ ξένε. 225
- ΟΡ. τί φῆς; ὅδ' ὃς σὸν ἐξέκλεψε σύγγονον;
- ΗΛ. ὅδ' ἔσθ' ὃ σώσας κείνον, εἶπερ ἔστ' ἔτι.
- ΟΡ. ἔα' [looking at the old man, who is observing him narrowly]  
τί μ' ἐσδέδορκεν, ὥσπερ ἀργύρου σκοπῶν  
λαμπρὸν χαρακτῆρ'; ἢ προσεικάζει μέ τῳ;
- ΗΛ. ἴσως Ὀρέστου σ' ἥλιχ' ἦδεται βλέπων. 230  
[The old man still gazing at ORESTES walks slowly round him.]
- ΟΡ. φίλου γε φωτός· τί δὲ κυκλεῖ πέριξ πόδα;
- ΗΛ. καὐτὴ τόδ' εἰσορώσα θαυμάζω, ξένε.
- ΠΡ. [advancing to ELECTRA]  
ὦ πότνι', εὔχου, θύγατερ Ἥλέκτρα, θεοῖς

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- ΗΛ.** [*interrupting*] τί τῶν ἀπόντων ἢ τί τῶν ὄντων πέρι ;  
**ΠΡ.** [*solemnly*] λαβεῖν φίλον θησαυρόν, ὃν φαίνει θεός. 235  
**ΗΛ.** ἰδοῦ, καλῶ θεούς.

[*clasping her hands*] ἢ τί δὴ λέγεις, γέρον ;

- ΠΡ.** βλέψον νυν ἐς τόνδ', ὦ τέκνον, τὸν φίλτατον.

[*turning her round to ORESTES.*]

- ΗΛ.** [*sadly*] πάλαι δέδοικα, μὴ σύ γ' οὐκέτ' εὖ φρονῆς.

- ΠΡ.** οὐκ εὖ φρονῶ γὰρ σὸν κασίγνητον βλέπων ;

- ΗΛ.** [*starting suddenly*]

πῶς εἶπας, ὦ γεραί', ἀνέλπιστον λόγον ; 240

- ΠΡ.** [*emphatically*] ὁρᾶν Ὀρέστην τόνδε τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονος

- ΗΛ.** ποῖον χαρακτήρ' εἰσιδών, ᾧ πεῖσομαι ; [*incredulous*]

- ΠΡ.** [*pointing at a scar in ORESTES' forehead*]

οὐλὴν παρ' ὀφρύν, ἣν ποτ' ἐν πατρός δόμοις

νεβρὸν διώκων σοῦ μέθ' ἡμάχθῃ πεσών.

- ΗΛ.** πῶς φῆς ; ὀρῶ μὲν πτώματος τεκμήριον. 245

[*astounded, but still hesitating.*]

- ΠΡ.** ἔπειτα μέλλεις προσπίτνειν τοῖς φιλτάτοις ;

- ΗΛ.** [*resolved*] ἀλλ' οὐκέτ', ὦ γεραίέ· συμβόλοισι γὰρ

τοῖς σοῖς πέπεισμαι θυμόν. [*she rushes in a transport of joy into her brother's arms.*] ὦ χρόνῳ φανεῖς,

ἔχω σ' ἀέλπτως. **ΟΡ.** καὶ ἐμοῦ γ' ἔχει χρόνῳ.

- ΗΛ.** οὐδέποτε δόξας'. **ΟΡ.** οὐδ' ἐγὼ γὰρ ἤλπισα. 250

- ΠΡ.** ἐκείνος εἰ σύ ;

- ΟΡ.** σύμμαχός γέ σοι μόνος,

ἣν ἐκσπάσωμαί γ' ὃν μετέρχομαι βόλον.

πέποιθα δ'. ἢ χρὴ μηκέθ' ἡγεῖσθαι θεούς,

εἰ τᾶδικ' ἔσται τῆς δίκης ὑπέρτερα. [*with confidence.*]

## EURIPIDES.

### SCENE V.

#### THE PLOT.

ORESTES and ELECTRA embracing. At last ORESTES turns with a sigh to the old man, who stands a little apart. PYLADES is a silent spectator of the scene.

- OP. εἶεν· φίλας μὲν ἡδονὰς ἀσπασμάτων 255  
ἔχω, χρόνῳ δὲ καὐθις αὐτὰ δώσομεν.  
σὺ δ', ὦ γεραιέ, κάρριος γὰρ ἤλυθες,  
λέξον, τί δρῶν ἂν φονέα τισαίμην πατρὸς  
μητέρα τε τὴν κοινωνὸν ἀνοσίων γάμων.  
ἔστιν τί μοι κατ' Ἄργος εὐμενὲς φίλων; 260  
ἢ πάντ' ἀνεσκευάσμεθ', ὥσπερ αἱ τύχαι;  
τῷ συγγένωμαι; νύχιος, ἢ καθ' ἡμέραν;  
ποῖαν ὁδὸν τραπώμεθ' εἰς ἐχθροὺς ἐμούς;
- ΠΡ. ὦ τέκνον, οὐδεὶς δυστυχοῦντί σοι φίλος.  
εὖρημα γὰρ τὸ χρήμα γίγνεται τόδε, 265  
κοινῇ μετασχεῖν τὰ γαθοῦ καὶ τοῦ κακοῦ.  
σὺ δ', ἐκ βάθρων γὰρ πᾶς ἀνήρησαι φίλοις  
οὐδ' ἐλλέλοιπας ἐλπιδ', ἴσθι μου κλύων,  
ἐν χειρὶ τῇ σῇ πάντ' ἔχεις καὶ τῇ τύχῃ  
πατρῶον οἶκον καὶ πόλιν λαβεῖν σέθεν. 270
- OP. τί δῆτα δρῶντες τοῦδ' ἂν ἐξικόμεθα;  
ΠΡ. κτανὼν Θυνέστου παῖδα σὴν τε μητέρα.  
OP. ἦκω 'πὶ τόνδε στέφανον. ἀλλὰ πῶς λάβω;

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- ΠΡ. τειχέων μὲν ἐλθὼν ἐντὸς οὐδ' ἂν εἰ θέλοις.  
 ΟΡ. φρουραῖς κέκασται δεξιαῖς τε δορυφόρων ; 275  
 ΠΡ. ἔγνωσ' φοβεῖται γάρ σε κοῦχ εὐδὲ σαφῶς.  
 ΟΡ. [*depressed*] εἶεν· σὺ δὴ τοῦνθένδε βούλευσον, γέρον.  
 ΠΡ. κάμου γ' ἄκουσον ἄρτι γάρ μ' εἰσῆλθέ τι.  
 ΟΡ. [*fervently*] ἐσθλὸν τι μηνύσειας, αἰσθοίμην δ' ἐγώ.  
 ΠΡ. Αἰγισθον εἶδον, ἡνίχ' εἶρπον ἐνθάδε. 280  
 ΟΡ. τί δρῶνθ' ; ὁρῶ γὰρ ἐλπιδ' ἐξ ἀμηχάνων.  
 ΠΡ. οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἔν, βουσφαγεῖν ὠπλίζετο.  
 ΟΡ. πόσων μετ' ἀνδρῶν ; ἡ μόνος δμῶων μέτα ;  
 ΠΡ. οὐδεὶς παρῆν Ἀργεῖος, οἰκεία δὲ χεῖρ.  
 ΟΡ. οὐ πού τις ὅστις γνωριεῖ μ' ἰδὼν, γέρον ; 285  
 ΠΡ. δμῶες μὲν εἰσι, οἱ σέ γ' οὐκ εἶδόν ποτε.  
 ΟΡ. ἡμῶν δ' ἂν εἶεν, εἰ κρατοῖμεν, εὐμενεῖς ;  
 ΠΡ. [*with a touch of satire*]  
 δούλων γὰρ ἴδιον τοῦτο, σοὶ δὲ σύμφορον.  
 ΟΡ. κυλῶς ἔλεξας. ἡ τεκοῦσα δ' ἐστὶ ποῦ ;  
 ΠΡ. Ἀργεῖ· παρέσται δ' ἐν τάχει θοίνην ἐπι. 290  
 ΟΡ. τί δ' οὐχ ἄμ' ἐξωρμάτ' ἐμὴ μήτηρ πόσει ;  
 ΠΡ. [*scornfully*] ψόγον τρέμουσα δημοτῶν ἐλείπετο.  
 ΟΡ. ξυνήχ'· ὕποπτος οὔσα γιγνώσκει πόλει.  
 ΠΡ. τοιαῦτα· μισεῖται γὰρ ἀνόσιος γυνή.  
 ΟΡ. πῶς οὖν ἐκείνην τόνδε τ' ἐν ταύτῃ κτενῶ ; 295  
 ΗΛ. ἐγὼ φόνον γε μητρὸς ἐξαρτύσομαι.  
 ΟΡ. καὶ μὴν ἐκεῖνά γ' ἡ τύχη θήσει καλῶς.  
 ΗΛ. [*turning to point to the old man*]  
 ὑπηρετέλω μὲν δυοῖν ὄντοιν ὁδε.  
 ΠΡ. ἔσται τάδ' εὐρίσκεις δὲ μητρὶ πῶς φόνον ;

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- ΗΛ. λεχώ μ' ἀπάγγελλ' οὔσαν ἄρσενος τόκῳ. 300  
 ΠΡ. πότερα πάλαι τεκοῦσαν, ἢ νωστί δή;  
 ΗΛ. δέχ' ἡλίους, ἐν οἷσιν ἀγνεύει λεχώ.  
 ΠΡ. καὶ δὴ τί τοῦτο μητρὶ προσβάλλει φόνον;  
 ΗΛ. ἤξει κλύουσα λόχι' ἐμοῦ νοσήματα.  
 ΠΡ. πόθεν; τί δ' αὐτῇ σοῦ μέλειν δοκεῖς, τέκνον; 305  
 ΗΛ. ναί· καὶ δακρύσει γ' ἀξίωμ' ἐμῶν τόκων.  
 ΠΡ. ἴσως· πάλιν τοι μῦθον ἐς καμπὴν ἄγω.  
 ΗΛ. [*with stern resolve*]  
 ἐλθοῦσα μέντοι δῆλον ὥς ἀπόλλυται.  
 ΠΡ. εἰ γὰρ θάνοιμι τοῦτ' ἰδὼν ἐγὼ ποτε. [*earnestly.*]  
 ΗΛ. [*pointing to ORESTES*]  
 πρῶτιστα μέν νυν τῷδ' ὑφήγησαι, γέρον. 310  
 ΠΡ. Αἰγισθος ξυθα νῦν θυηπολεῖ θεοῖς;  
 ΗΛ. ἔπειτ' ἀπαντῶν μητρὶ τὰπ' ἐμοῦ φράσον.  
 ΠΡ. ὥστ' αὐτά γ' ἐκ σοῦ στόματος εἰρῆσθαι δοκεῖν.  
 ΗΛ. [*to ORESTES*] σὸν ἔργον ἤδη· πρόσθεν εἵληχας φόνου  
 ΟΡ. στείχοιμ' ἄν, εἴ τις ἡγεμὼν γίγνοιθ' ὁδοῦ. 315  
 ΗΛ. καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ πέμποιμ' ἄν οὐκ ἀκουσίως.  
 ΟΡ. [*holding up his hands to pray*]  
 ὦ Ζεῦ πατρῶε καὶ τροπαῖ' ἐχθρῶν ἐμῶν,  
 οἴκτειρέ θ' ἡμᾶς, οἴκτρὰ γὰρ πεπόνηθαμεν,—  
 ΗΛ. [*interrupting, and praying likewise*]  
 οἴκτειρε δῆτα σοῦ γε φύντας ἐκ γένους.  
 ΟΡ. Ἥρα τε, βωμῶν ἢ Μυκηναίων κρατεῖς, 320  
 νίκην δὸς ἡμῖν, εἰ δίκαι' αἰτούμεθα.  
 ΗΛ. δὸς δῆτα πατρὸς τοῖσδε τιμωρὸν δίκην.

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OP. [*gazing earnestly on the ground*]

σύ τ', ὦ κάτω γῆς ἀνοσίως οἰκῶν, πάτερ,  
ἄμυν' ἄμυνε τοῖσδε φιλτάτοις τέκνοις.

[*a pause: then passionately*]

ἤκουσας, ὦ δέιν' ἐξ ἐμῆς μητρὸς παθῶν; 325

ΗΛ. [*with firmness*]

πάντ', οἶδ', ἀκούει τὰδε πατήρ· στείχειν δ' ἀκμή.

καί σοι προφωνῶ πρὸς τὰδ' Αἰγισθον θανείν·

ὥς, εἰ παλαισθεῖς πτῶμα θανάσιμον πεσεῖ,

τέθνηκα κἀγώ, μηδέ με ζῶσαν λέγε·

παίσω κára γὰρ τοῦμόν ἀμφήκει ξίφει. 330

δόμων δ' ἔσω βᾶσ' εὐτρεπὲς ποιήσομαι.

ὥς, ἣν μὲν ἔλθῃ πύστις εὐτυχῆς σέθεν,

ὀλολύζεται πᾶν δῶμα, θνήσκοντος δέ σου

τάναντλ' ἔσται τῶνδε· ταῦτά σοι λέγω.

OP. πάντ' οἶδα.

ΗΛ. πρὸς τὰδ' ἄνδρα γίγνεσθαί σε χρή. 335

[*Exit ORESTES.*]

[*turning to the CHORUS*]

ὕμεῖς δέ μοι, γυναῖκες, εὖ πυρσεύετε

κραυγὴν ἀγῶνος τοῦδε. φρουρήσω δ' ἐγώ,

ποόχειον ἐγχος χειρὶ βαστάζουσ' ἐμῇ·

[*with a noble defiance*]

οὐ γάρ ποτ' ἐχθροῖς τοῖς ἐμοῖς νικωμένη

δίκην ὑφέξω σῶμ' ἐμὸν καθυβρίσαι.

340

[*Exit into the cottage.*]

# EURIPIDES.

## SCENE VI.

### THE RETRIBUTION.

*The CHORUS alone in the orchestra, singing. Suddenly a noise of voices, and confused tumult, and groans, are heard in the distance. The CHORUS stop singing, and the leader, while they look at each other with startled glances, says :—*

**XO.** ἔα ἔα·

φίλοι, βοῆς ἠκούσατ', ἡ δοκῶ κενὴ  
ὑπῆλθέ μ', ὥστε νερτέρα βροντῇ Διός ;  
[*pauses ; then as the tumult becomes louder*]  
ἰδοὺ τάδ' οὐκ ἄσσημα πνεύματ' αἴρεται·  
[*mounting the stage rapidly, and advancing to the house*  
*door she calls out in a loud voice*]

δέσποιν', ἄμειψον δώματ', Ἡλέκτρα, τάδε. 345

**ΗΛ.** [*ELECTRA comes out eagerly with a sword*]

φίλοι, τί χρῆμα ; πῶς ἀγῶνος ἤκομεν ;

**XO.** οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ξυ, φόνιον οἰμωγὴν κλύω.

**ΗΛ.** ἤκουσα καὶ γὰρ, τηλόθεν μὲν, ἀλλ' ὁμως.

**XO.** μακρὰν γὰρ ἔρπει γῆρυς, ἐμφανὴς γε μήν.

**ΗΛ.** Ἀργεῖος ὁ στεναγμός, ἡ φίλων ἐμῶν ; 350

**XO.** οὐκ οἶδα· πᾶν γὰρ μίγνυται μέλος βοῆς.

**ΗΛ.** σφαγὴν αὐτεῖς τήνδε μοι· τί μέλλομεν ;

[*drawing her sword*]

**XO.** [*staying her*] ἔπισχε, τρανῶς ὥς μάθης τύχας σέθεν.

**ΗΛ.** οὐκ ἔστι· νικώμεσθα· ποῦ γὰρ ἄγγελοι ; [*in despair*]



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ΧΟ. ἤξουσιν· οὗτοι βασιλέα φαῦλον κτανεῖν. 355

[Enter messenger hastily and triumphantly.]

ΑΓ. ὦ καλλίνικοι παρθένοι Μυκηνίδες,  
νικῶντ' Ὀρέστην πᾶσι ἀγγέλλω φίλοις,  
Ἀγαμέμνονος δὲ φονέα κείμενον πέδῳ  
Αἰγισθον· ἀλλὰ θεοῖσι εὐχέσθαι χρεών.

ΗΛ. τίς δ' εἶ σύ; πῶς μοι πιστὰ σημαίνεις τάδε; 360

ΑΓ. [surprised] οὐκ οἶσθ' ἀδελφοῦ μ' εἰσορῶσα πρόσπολον;

ΗΛ. [in sudden joyful recognition]

ὦ φίλτατ', ἔκ τοι δείματος δυσγνωσίαν  
εἶχον προσώπου· νῦν δὲ γινώσκω σε δή.  
τί φής; τέθηκε πατὸς ἐμοῦ στυγνὸς φονεύς;

ΑΓ. τέθηκε· δὲς σοι ταῦθ', ἃ γοῦν βούλει, λέγω. 365

ΧΟ. [with uplifted hands]

ὦ θεοί, Δίκη τε πάνθ' ὀρώσ', ἡλθές ποτε.

ΗΛ. ποίῳ τρόπῳ δὲ καὶ τίνι ῥυθμῷ φόβου  
κτείνει Θυέστου παῖδα, βούλομαι μαθεῖν.

ΑΓ. ἐπεὶ μελάρων τῶνδ' ἀπήραμεν πόδα,  
ἐσβάντες ἤμεν δίκροτον εἰς ἀμαξιτὸν 370  
ἐνθ' ἦν ὁ κλεινὸς τῶν Μυκηναίων ἀναξ.

κυρεῖ δὲ κήποις ἐν καταρρύτοις βεβώς,  
δρέπων τερείνης μυρσίνης κάρῃ πλόκου·  
ἰδὼν τ' αὐτεῖ, 'χαίρετ', ὦ ξένοι· τίνες;  
' πόθεν πορεύεσθ' ἔστε τ' ἐκ πόλεως χθονός;' 375

ὁ δ' εἶπ' Ὀρέστης, 'Θεσσαλοί· πρὸς δ' Ἀλφεὸν  
' θύσοντας ἐρχόμεσθ' Ὀλυμπίῳ Διί·'  
κλύων δὲ ταῦτ' Αἰγισθος ἐννέπει τάδε·  
' νῦν μὲν παρ' ἡμῖν χρὴ συνεστίους ἐμοί

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' θοίῃ γενέσθαι· τυγχάνω δὲ βουθυτῶν 380  
 ' Νύμφαις· ἑῷοι δ' ἔξαναστάντες λέχους  
 ' ἐς ταῦτόν ἤξει'. ἀλλ' ἴωμεν ἐς δόμους.  
 καὶ ταῦθ' ἄμ' ἡγόρευε καὶ χερὸς λαβὼν  
 παρήγεν ἡμᾶς, οὐδ' ἀπαρνείσθαι χρεῶν.  
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐν οἴκοις ἤμεν, ἐννέπει τάδε· 385  
 ' λούτρ' ὥς τάχιστα τοῖς ξένοις τις αἰρέτω,  
 ' ὥς ἀμφὶ βωμὸν στῶσι χερνίβων πέλας.'  
 ἀλλ' εἰπ' Ὀρέστης, ' ἀρτίως ἡγνίσμεθα  
 ' λουτροῖσι καθαροῖς ποταμίων ρείθρων ἄπο.  
 ' εἰ δὲ ξένους ἀστοῖσι συνθύειν χρεῶν, 390  
 ' Αἴγισθ', ἔτοιμοι, κοῦκ ἀπαρνούμεσθ', ἀναξ·  
 τοῦτον μὲν οὖν μεθεῖσαν ἐκ μέσου λόγον·  
 λόγχας δὲ θέντες, δεσπότην φρουρήματα,  
 δμῶες, πρὸς ἔργον πάντες ἴεσαν χέρας.  
 οἱ μὲν σφαγεῖον ἔφερον, οἱ δ' ἥρον κανᾶ, 395  
 ἄλλοι δὲ πῦρ ἀνῆπτον ἀμφὶ τ' ἐσχάρυς  
 λέβητας ὥρθουν· πᾶσα δ' ἐκτύπει στέγη.  
 λαβὼν δὲ προχύτας μητρὸς εὐνέτης σέθεν  
 ἔβαλλε βωμούς, τοιάδ' ἐννέπων ἔπη·  
 ' Νύμφαι πετραῖαι, πολλάκις με βουθυτεῖν 400  
 ' καὶ τὴν κατ' οἴκους Τυνδαρίδα δάμαρτ' ἐμήν,  
 ' πρᾶσσοντας ὥς νῦν, τοὺς δ' ἐμοὺς ἐχθροὺς κακῶς·'  
 λέγων Ὀρέστην καὶ σέ· δεσπότης δ' ἐμὸς  
 τᾶναντί' ἦνχετ', οὐ γεγωνίσκων λόγους,  
 λαβεῖν πατρῷα δώματ'. ἐκ κανοῦ δ' ἔλawn 405  
 Αἴγισθος ὀρθὴν σφαγίδα, μοσχίαν τρίχα  
 τεμών, ἐφ' ἀγνὸν πῦρ ἔθηκε δεξιᾷ,

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κάσφαξ', ἐπ' ὤμων μόσχον ὥς ἦραν χεροῖν  
 δμῶες· λέγει δὲ σῶ κασιγνήτῳ τάδε·  
 'ἐκ τῶν καλῶν κομποῦσι τοῖσι Θεσσαλοῖς 410  
 'εἶναι τόδ', ὅστις ταῦρον ἀρταμεῖ καλῶς  
 'ἵππους τ' ὀχμάζει. λαβὲ σίδηρον, ὦ ξέने,  
 'δεῖξόν τε φήμην ἔτυμον ἀμφὶ Θεσσαλῶν.'  
 ὁ δ' εὐκρότητον Δωρίδ' ἀρπάσας χεροῖν,  
 ῥίψας ἀπ' ὤμων εὐπρεπῇ πορπάματα, 415  
 Πυλάδην μὲν εἴλετ' ἐν πόνοις ὑπηρέτην,  
 δμῶας δ' ἀπωθεῖ· καὶ λαβὼν μόσχον πόδα,  
 λευκὰς ἐγύμνου σάρκας, ἐκτείνων χέρα·  
 θάσσον δὲ βύρσαν ἐξέδειρεν ἢ δρομεὺς  
 δισσοὺς διαύλους ἱππίους διήνυσε, 420  
 κἀνεῖτο λαγόνας. ἱρὰ δ' ἐς χεῖρας λαβὼν  
 Αἰγισθος ἤθρει. καὶ λοβὸς μὲν οὐ προσήν  
 σπλάγχνοις, πύλαι δὲ καὶ δοχαὶ χολῆς πέλας  
 κακὰς ἐφαινον τῷ σκοποῦντι προσβολὰς.  
 χῶ μὲν σκυθράζει, δεσπότης δ' ἀνιστορεῖ, 425  
 'τί χρήμ' ἀθυμεῖς, ὦ ξέν';' 'ὄρρωδῶ τινα  
 'δόλον θυραῖον. ἔστι δ' ἐχθιστος βροτῶν  
 'Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖς πολέμιός τ' ἐμοῖς δόμοις.'  
 ὁ δ' εἶπε, 'φυγάδος δῆτα δειμαίνεις δόλον,  
 'πόλεως ἀνάσσω ; οὐχ, ὅπως πευστηρίαν 430  
 'θοινασόμεσθα, Φθιάδ' ἀντὶ Δωρικῆς  
 'οἴσει τις ἡμῖν κοπίδ'; ἀπορρήξω χέλυν.'  
 λαβὼν δὲ κόπτει. σπλάγχνα δ' Αἰγισθος λαβὼν  
 ἤθρει διαιρῶν. τοῦ δὲ νεύοντος κάτω,  
 δυνχας ἐπ' ἄκρους στὰς κασιγνητος σέθεν 435

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ἐς σφονδύλους ἔπαισε, νωτιαῖα δὲ  
 ἔρρηξεν ἄρθρα. πᾶν δὲ σῶμ' ἄνω κάτω  
 ἤσπαιρεν, ἐσφάδαζε δυσθνήσκον ῥόνω.  
 δμῶες δ' ἰδόντες εὐθὺς ἦξαν ἐς δόρυ,  
 πολλοὶ μάχεσθαι πρὸς δὺ'. ἀνδρείας δ' ὑπο 440  
 ἔστησαν ἀντίπρῳρα σείοντες βέλη  
 Πυλάδης Ὀρέστης τ'. εἶπε δ', 'οὐχὶ δυσμενὴς  
 ' ἦκω πόλει τῇδ', οὐδ' ἐμοῖς ὀπάοσι,  
 ' φονέα δὲ πατρὸς ἀντετιμωρησάμην  
 ' τλήμων Ὀρέστης. ἀλλὰ μὴ με κτείνετε, 445  
 ' πατρὸς παλαιοὶ δμῶες.' οἱ δ', ἐπεὶ λόγων  
 ἤκουσαν, ἔσχον κάμακας· ἐγνώσθη δ' ὑπὸ  
 γέροντος ἐν δόμοισιν ἀρχαίου τινός.  
 στέφουσι δ' εὐθὺς σοῦ κασιγνήτου κάρα  
 χαίροντες, ἀλαλάζοντες. ἔρχεται δὲ σοὶ 450  
 κάρα 'πιδείξων, οὐχὶ Γοργόνος φέρων,  
 ἀλλ' ὃν στυγεῖς Αἰγισθον· αἷμα δ' αἵματος  
 πικρὸς δανεισμός ἦλθε τῷ θανόντι νῦν.

[ELECTRA goes excitedly into the house; the messenger follows  
 slowly.]

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### SCENE VII.

#### ELECTRA'S CURSE.

*The CHORUS in the orchestra, singing a song of triumph. Enter OBESTES and PYLADES, the former carrying the bleeding head of AEGISTHUS. Attendants behind carry the body on a litter. As he approaches the cottage, ELECTRA comes out with two garlands in her hand, radiant. She advances towards him, and says:—*

ΗΛ. ὦ καλλίνικε, πατρὸς ἐκ νικηφόρου  
γεγώς, 'Ορέστα, τῆς ὑπ' 'Ιλίου μάχης, 455  
δέξαι κόμης σῆς βοστρύχων ἀνδήματα.

[placing one garland on his head]

ῆκεις γὰρ οὐκ ἀχρεῖον ἔκπλεθρον δραμῶν  
ἀγών' ἐς οἴκους, ἀλλὰ πολέμιον κτανῶν  
Αἰγισθον, ὃς σὸν πατέρα κάμδον ὤλεσε.  
σύ τ', ὦ παρασπίστ', ἀνδρὸς εὐσεβεστάτου 460  
παίδευμα, Πυλάδῃ, στέφανον ἐξ ἐμῆς χερὸς  
δέχου·

[crowning him too] φέρει γὰρ καὶ σὺ τῷδ' ἴσον μέρος  
ἀγῶνος· αἰεὶ δ' εὐτυχεῖς φαίνοισθέ μοι.

ΟΡ. [gravely] θεοὺς μὲν ἡγοῦ πρώτον, 'Ηλέκτρα, τύχης  
ἀρχηγέτας τῆσδ', εἴτα κἄμ' ἐπαίνεσον, 465  
τὸν τῶν θεῶν τε τῆς τύχης θ' ὑπηρέτην.  
ῆκω γὰρ σὺ λόγοισιν, ἀλλ' ἔργοις κτανῶν  
Αἰγισθον· ὥς δέ τῃ σάφ' εἰδέναι τάδε  
προθῶμεν, αὐτὸν τὸν θανόντα σοι φέρω,

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[holding up the head and showing the body]

ὄν, εἴτε χρήσεις, θηρσὶν ἄρπαγὴν πρόθεσ,  
ἢ σκύλον οἰωνοῖσιν, αἰθέρος τέκνοις,  
πήξας' ἔρεισον σκόλοπι· σὸς γάρ ἔστι νῦν  
δοῦλος, πάροιθε δεσπότης κεκλημένος.

ΗΛ. [after a pause, reluctant]

αἰσχύνομαι μὲν, βούλομαι δ' εἰπεῖν ὅμως

ΟΡ. τί χρήμα; λέξον, ὥς φόβου γ' ἔξωθεν εἴ. 475

ΗΛ. νεκροὺς ὑβρίζειν, μή μὲ τις φθόνῳ βάλῃ.

ΟΡ. οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεὶς ὅστις ἂν μέμψαιτό σοι.

ΗΛ. [doubtful] δυσάρεστος ἡμῶν καὶ φιλόσογος πόλις.

ΟΡ. λέγ', εἴ τι χρήσεις, σύγγον'· ἀσπόνθοισι γὰρ  
νόμοισιν ἔχθραν τῷδε συμβεβλήκαμεν. 480

ΗΛ. [resolute] εἶεν· τίν' ἀρχὴν πρῶτά σ' ἐξείπω κακῶν;  
[gazing at the head]

ποίας τελευτάς; τίνα μέσον τάξω λόγον;  
καὶ μὴν δι' ὄρθρων γ' οὔ ποτ' ἐξελίμπανον  
θρυλοῦσ', ἃ γ' εἰπεῖν ἤθελον κατ' ὄμμα σόν,  
εἰ δὴ γενοίμην δειμάτων ἐλευθέρα 485

τῶν πρόσθε· νῦν οὖν ἐσμέν· ἀποδώσω δέ σοι  
ἐκεῖν' ἃ σε ζῶντ' ἤθελον λέξαι κακά.

ἀπώλεσάς με κῶρφανὴν φίλου πατρὸς  
καὶ τόνδ' ἔθηκας, οὐδὲν ἡδικομένος,

κἀγῆμας αἰσχροῶς μητέρ', ἄνδρα τ' ἔκτανες 490  
στρατηλατοῦνθ' Ἑλλησι, οὐκ ἐλθὼν Φρύγας.

ἔς τοῦτο δ' ἡλθες ἀμαθίας ὥστ' ἡλπισας  
ὥς ἐς σέ μὲν δὴ μητέρ' οὐχ ἔξεις κακὴν

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γήμας, ἐμοῦ δὲ πατρὸς ἡδίκεις λέχη.  
 ἴστω δ', ὅταν τις διολέσας δάμαρτά του 495  
 κρυπταῖσιν εὐναῖς εἴτ' ἀναγκασθῇ λαβεῖν,  
 δύστηνός ἐστιν, εἰ δοκεῖ τὸ σωφρονεῖν  
 ἐκεῖ μὲν αὐτὴν οὐκ ἔχειν, παρ' οἱ δ' ἔχειν.  
 ἀλγιστα δ' ὧκεις, οὐ δοκῶν οἰκεῖν κακῶς·  
 ῥῆσθα γὰρ δῆτ' ἀνόσιον γήμας γάμον, 500  
 μήτηρ δὲ σ' ἄνδρα δυσσεβῇ κεκτημένη.  
 πᾶσιν δ' ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἤκουες τάδε·  
 ὁ τῆς γυναικός, οὐχὶ τάνδρὸς ἡ γυνή.  
 καίτοι τόδ' αἰσχρόν, προστατεῖν γε δωμάτων  
 γυναῖκα, μὴ τὸν ἄνδρα· κἀκείνους στυγῶ 505  
 τοὺς παῖδας, ὅστις τοῦ μὲν ἄρσενος πατρὸς  
 οὐκ ὠνόμασται, τῆς δὲ μητρὸς ἐν πόλει.  
 ἐπίσημα γὰρ γήμαντι καὶ μείζω λέχη,  
 τάνδρὸς μὲν οὐδεῖς, τῶν δὲ θηλειῶν λόγος.  
 δ' δ' ἡπάτα σε πλεῖστον οὐκ ἐγνωκότα, 510  
 ἤνχεις τις εἶναι, τοῖσι χρήμασι σθένων·  
 τὰ δ' οὐδέν, εἰ μὴ βραχὺν ὀμιλῆσαι χρόνον.  
 ἡ γὰρ φύσις βέβαιος, οὐ τὰ χρήματα.  
 ἡ μὲν γὰρ αἰὲ παραμένουσ' αἶρει κἀρα·  
 ὁ δ' ὄλβος ἄδικος καὶ μετὰ σκαιῶν ξυνών, 515  
 ἐξέπτατ' οἰκῶν, σμικρὸν ἀνθήσας χρόνον.  
 [turning away with passionate scorn]  
 ἔρρ', οὐδὲν εἰδὼς ὦν ἐφευρεθεῖς χρόνον  
 δίκην δέδωκας, ὧδέ τις κακοῦργος ὦν.  
 μή μοι, τὸ πρῶτον βῆμ' ἔαν δράμῃ καλῶς,

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νικᾶν δοκέτω τὴν Δίκην, πρὶν ἂν πέλας 520

γραμμῆς ἴκηται, καὶ τέλος κάμψῃ βίου.

OP. [*to attendants*] εἶεν. κομίζεῖν τοῦδε σῶμ' ἔσω χρεῶν  
σκότῳ τε δοῦναι, δμῶες, ὥς, ὅταν μόλῃ  
μήτηρ, σφαγῆς πάροιθε μή σφ' ἴδῃ νεκρόν.

[*the attendants take away the body.*]

HA. [*suddenly, looking off the stage*]

ἐπίσχε· ἐμβάλλωμεν εἰς ἄλλον λόγον. 525

OP. τί δ' ; ἐκ Μυκηνῶν μῶν βοηδρόμους ὁρᾷς ;

HA. οὐκ, ἀλλὰ τὴν τεκοῦσαν, ἣ μ' ἐγένεατο.

OP. καλῶς ἄρ' ἄρκυν ἐς μέσσην πορεύεται.

HA. καὶ μὴν ὄχοις γε καὶ στολῇ λαμπρύνεται.

OP. [*irresolute*] τί δῆτα δρῶμεν ; μητέρ' ἢ φονεύσομεν ; 530

HA. [*eternly*] μῶν σ' οἶκτος εἶλε, μητρὸς ὥς εἶδες δέμας ;

OP. φεῦ. [*hesitating and downcast.*]

πῶς γὰρ κτάνω νιν, ἥ μ' ἔθρεψε κᾶτεκεν ;

HA. ὥσπερ πατέρα σὸν ἦδε κᾶμόν ὤλεσεν.

OP. [*piteously*] ὦ Φοῖβε, πολλήν γ' ἀμαθίαν ἐθέσπισας,—

HA. [*interrupting*]

ὅπου δ' Ἀπόλλων σκαιὸς ἦ, τίνες σοφοί ; 535

OP. ὅστις μ' ἔχρησας μητέρ', ἣν οὐ χρῆν, κτανεῖν.

HA. βλάπτει δὲ δὴ τί πατρὶ τιμωρῶν σέθεν ;

OP. μητροκτόνος νῦν φεύξομαι, τόθ' ἄγνός ὢν.

HA. καὶ μή γ' ἀμύνων πατρὶ δυσσεβῆς ἔσει.

OP. ἐγὼ δὲ μητρὶ τοῦ φόνου δώσω δίκας. 540

HA. οὐ μὴ κακισθεὶς εἰς ἀνανδρίαν πεσεῖ ;

OP. [*roused*] ἀλλ' ἢ τὸν αὐτὸν τῇδ' ὑποστήσω δόλον



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ΗΛ. ὦ καὶ πόσω καθεῖλες Αἰγισθον κτανών. ✓

ΟΡ. [*firmly*] εἴσειμι· δεινοῦ δ' ἄρχομαι προβλήματος.  
καὶ δεινὰ δράσω γ· εἰ θεοῖς δοκεῖ τάδε, 545  
ἔστω· πικρὸν δὲ χηδὺν τὰ γώνισμά μοι.

[Exit into the house, followed by ELECTRA, slowly, in deep  
thought.]

## EURIPIDES.

### SCENE VIII.

#### FINAL VENGEANCE.

*Enter slowly the chariot of CLYTAEMNESTRA, with gorgeous trappings. She herself is seated in the centre, with her Trojan maidens round her. When the chariot stops, CLYTAEMNESTRA turns to her maidens and bids them dismount. ELEOTRA stands humbly in the background, waiting to receive her.*

**ΚΛ.** ἐκβητ' ἀπήνης, Τρῳάδες, χειρὸς δ' ἐμῆς  
λάβεσθ', ἴν' ἔξω τοῦδ' ὅχου στήσω πόδα.

[*Trojan maidens dismount.*]

σκύλοισι μὲν γὰρ θεῶν κεκόσμηται δόμοι  
Φρυγίοις, ἐγὼ δὲ τάσδε, Τρῳάδος χθονὸς 550  
ἐξαίρετ', ἀντὶ παιδὸς ἣν ἀπώλεσα,  
σμικρὸν γέρας, καλὸν δὲ κέκτημαι δόμοις.

**ΗΛ.** [*coming modestly forward and offering to help*]  
οὔκουν ἐγώ, δούλη γὰρ ἐκβεβλημένη  
δόμων πατρώων δυστυχεῖς οἰκῶ δόμους,  
μήτηρ, λάβωμαι μακαρίας τῆς σῆς χερὸς; 555

**ΚΛ.** [*coldly*] δοῦλαι πάρεισιν αἶδε, μὴ σύ μοι πόνει.

**ΗΛ.** [*bitterly*] τί δ'; αἰχμάλωτόν τοί μ' ἀπφίκισας δόμων,  
ῥημένων δὲ δωμάτων ῥήμεθα,  
ὥς αἶδε, πατρὸς ὀρφαναὶ λελειμμένοι.

**ΚΛ.** τοιαῦτα μέντοι σὸς πατὴρ βουλευματα 560  
εἰς οὗς ἐχρῆν ἦκιστ' ἐβούλευσεν φίλων.  
κεῖ μὲν πόλεως ἄλωσιν ἐξιώμενος,

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ἡ δῶμ' ὀνήσων τάλλα τ' ἐκσώζων τέκνα  
 ἔκτεινε πολλῶν μίαν ὕπερ, συγγνώστ' ἂν ἦν·  
 νῦν δ', οὐνεχ' Ἑλένη μάργος ἦν, ὃ τ' αὖ λαβῶν 565  
 ἄλοχον κολάζειν προδότιν οὐκ ἠπίστατο,  
 τούτων ἕκατι παῖδ' ἐμὴν διώλεσεν.

εἰ δ' ἐκ δόμων ἦρπαστο Μενέλεως λάθρα,  
 κτανεῖν μ' Ὀρέστην χρῆν, κασιγνήτης πόσιω  
 Μενέλαον ὥς σώσαιμι; σὸς δὲ πῶς πατὴρ 570  
 ἠνέσχετ' ἂν ταῦτ'; εἴτα τὸν μὲν οὐ θανεῖν  
 κτείναντα χρῆν τᾶμ', ἐμὲ δὲ πρὸς κείνου παθεῖν;  
 ἔκτειν', ἐτρέφθην ἦνπερ ἦν πορεύσιμον  
 πρὸς τοὺς ἐκείνῳ πολεμίους. φίλων γὰρ ἂν  
 τίς ἂν πατρός σου φόνον ἐκοινώνησέ μοι;  
 λέγ', εἰ τι χρήξεις, κἀντίθες παρρησίᾳ,  
 ὅπως τέθυκε σὸς πατὴρ οὐκ ἐνδίκως. 575

**ΗΛ.** [*deliberate and cold*]

δίκαι' ἔλεξας· ἡ δίκη δ' αἰσχρῶς ἔχει·  
 γυναῖκα γὰρ χρὴ πάντα συγχωρεῖν πόσει,  
 ἥτις φρενῆρης. ἥ δὲ μὴ δοκεῖ τάδε, 580  
 [*scornfully*] οὐδ' εἰς ἀριθμὸν τῶν ἐμῶν ἦκει λόγων.  
 [*gentler*] μέμνησο, μήτηρ, οὗς ἔλεξας ὑστάτους  
 λόγους, διδοῦσα πρὸς σέ μοι παρρησίαν.

**ΚΛ.** καὶ νῦν γέ φημι, κοῦκ ἀπαρνοῦμαι, τέκνον.

**ΗΛ.** λέγοιμ' ἂν· ἀρχὴ δ' ἦδε μοι προοιμίου. 585  
 εἴθ' εἶχες, ὦ τεκοῦσα, βελτίους φρένας.  
 τὸ μὲν γὰρ εἶδος αἶνον ἄξιον φέρει  
 Ἑλένης τε καὶ σοῦ, δύο δ' ἔφυτε συγγόνῳ,  
 ἄμφω ματαίῳ Κάστορός τ' οὐκ ἀξίῳ.

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ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἄρπασθεῖς' ἐκούσ' ἀπ' ἔχετο, 590  
 σὺ δ' ἄνδρ' ἄριστον Ἑλλάδος διώλεσας,  
 σκῆψιν προτείνουσ', ὥς ὑπὲρ τέκνου πόσιν  
 ἔκτεινας· οὐ γὰρ, ὥς ἔγωγ', ἴσασι σ' εὖ  
 ἦτις, θυγατρὸς πρὶν κεκυρώσθαι σφαγὰς,  
 νέον τ' ἀπ' οἴκων ἀνδρὸς ἐξωρμημένου, 595  
 ξανθὸν κατόπτρῳ πλόκαμον ἐξήσκες κόμης.  
 γυνὴ δ' ἀπόντος ἀνδρὸς ἦτις ἐκ δόμων  
 ἐς κάλλος ἀσκεῖ, διάγραφ' ὥς οὔσαν κακὴν.  
 οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτὴν δεῖ θύρασιν εὐπρεπὲς  
 φαίνειν πρόσωπον, ἦν τι μὴ ζητῇ κακόν. 600  
 μόνην δὲ πασῶν οἶδ' ἐγὼ σ' Ἑλληνίδω  
 εἰ μὲν τὰ Τρώων εὐτυχοῖ, κεχαρμένην,  
 εἰ δ' ἦσσαν εἴη, συνεφούσαν ὄμματα,  
 Ἄγαμέμνον' οὐ χρῆζουσιν ἐκ Τροίας μολεῖν.  
 καίτοι καλῶς γε σωφρονεῖν παρεῖχέ σοι· 605  
 ἄνδρ' εἶχες οὐ κακίον' Αἰγίσθου πόσιν,  
 ὃν Ἑλλὰς αὐτῆς εἴλετο στρατηλάτην·  
 Ἐλένης δ' ἀδελφῆς τοιάδ' ἐξειργασμένης,  
 ἐξῆν κλέος σοι μέγα λαβεῖν· τὰ γὰρ κακὰ  
 παράδειγμα τοῖς ἐσθλοῖσιν εἴσοψιν τ' ἔχει. 610  
 εἰ δ', ὥς λέγεις, σὴν θυγατέρ' ἔκτεινεν πατήρ,  
 ἐγὼ τί σ' ἠδίκησ' ἐμός τε σύγγονος;  
 πῶς οὐ πόσιν κτείνασα πατρώους δόμους  
 ἡμῶν προσήψας, ἀλλ' ἀπηνέγκω λέχη  
 τὰλλότρια, μισθοῦ τοὺς γάμους ὠνούμενη, 615  
 κοῦτ' ἀντιφεύγει παιδὸς ἀντὶ σοῦ πόσις  
 οὔτ' αὐτ' ἐμοῦ τέθηκε, δις τόσως ἐμὲ

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κτείνας ἀδελφῆς ζῶσαν· εἰ δ' ἀμείψεται  
φόνον δικάζων φόνος, ἀποκτενῶ σ' ἐγὼ  
καὶ παῖς Ὀρέστης, πατρὶ τιμωρούμενοι· 620  
εἰ γὰρ δίκαι' ἐκεῖνα, καὶ τὰδ' ἔνδिका.

ὅστις δὲ πλοῦτον ἢ εὐγένειαν εἰσιδὼν  
γαμεῖ πονηράν, μῶρός ἐστι· μικρὰ γὰρ  
μεγάλων ἀμείνω σῶφρον' ἐν δόμοις λέχη.

**ΚΛ.** [*calmly*] ὦ παῖ, πέφυκας πατέρα σὸν στέργειν αἰέ, 625  
ἔστιν δὲ καὶ τόδ'· οἱ μὲν εἰσιν ἀρσένων,  
οἱ δ' αὖ φιλοῦσι μητέρας μᾶλλον πατρός.

συγγνώσομαί σοι· [*softening*] καὶ γὰρ οὐχ οὕτως ἄγαν  
χαίρω τι, τέκνον, τοῖς δεδραμένοις ἐμοί.  
[*suddenly looking with pity at her daughter's poor garments*]  
σὺ δ' ὦδ' ἄλυντος καὶ δυσείματος χροά 630

λεχῶ νεογνῶν ἐκ τόκων πεπαυμένη;

[*with a burst of remorse*]

οἴμοι τάλαινα τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων·  
ὥς μᾶλλον ἢ χρῆν ἤλασ' εἰς ὀργὴν πόσιν.

**ΗΛ.** [*sternly and contemptuously*]  
ὀψὲ στενάζεις, ἥνικ' οὐκ ἔχεις ἄκη·  
πατὴρ μὲν οὖν τέθνηκε· τὸν δ' ἔξω χθονὸς 635  
πῶς οὐ κομίζει παῖδ' ἀλητεύοντα σόν;

**ΚΛ.** δέδοικα· τοῦμὸν δ', οὐχὶ τοῦκείνου, σκοπῶ.  
πατρὸς γάρ, ὥς λέγουσι, θυμοῦται φόνος.

**ΗΛ.** τί δαὶ πόσιν σὸν ἄγριον εἰς ἡμᾶς ἔχεις;

**ΚΛ.** τρόποι τοιοῦτοι· καὶ σὺ δ' αὐθάδης ἔφυσ. 640

**ΗΛ.** [*indignantly*] ἀλγῶ γάρ·

[*controlling herself*] ἀλλὰ παύσομαι θυμουμένη.

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- ΚΛ. καὶ μὴν ἐκείνος οὐκέτ' ἔσται σοι βαρύς.  
 ΗΛ. φρονεῖ μέγ'· ἐν γὰρ τοῖς ἐμοῖς ναίει δόμοις.  
 ΚΛ. παῦσαι λόγων τῶνδ'· ἀλλὰ τί μ' ἐκάλεις, τέκνον;  
 ΗΛ. ἤκουσας, οἶμαι, τῶν ἐμῶν λοχευμάτων· 645  
 τούτων ὑπερ μοι θύσον, οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ἐγώ,  
 δεκάτῃ σελήνῃ παιδὸς ὥς νομίζεται·  
 τρίβων γὰρ οὐκ εἰμ', ἄτοκος οὖσ' ἐν τῷ πάρος.  
 ΚΛ. ἄλλης τόδ' ἔργον, ἥ σ' ἔλυσεν ἐκ τόκων.  
 ΗΛ. αὐτὴ 'λόχενον κἄτεκον μόνη βρέφος. 650  
 ΚΛ. [*surprised*] οὕτως ἀγείτου' οἶκον ἱδρυσαι φίλων;  
 ΗΛ. [*bitterly*] πένητας οὐδεὶς βούλεται κτᾶσθαι φίλους.  
 ΚΛ. ἀλλ' εἰμι, παιδὸς ἀριθμὸν ὥς τελεσφόοον  
 θύσω θεοῖσι· σοὶ δ' ὅταν πράξω χάριν  
 τήνδ', εἰμ' ἐπ' ἀγρόν, οὐ πόσις θυηπολεῖ 655  
 Νύμφαισιν. [*to attendants*] ἀλλὰ τούσδ' ὄχους, ὀπάδους,  
 φάτναις ἄγοντες πρόσθεθ'. ἡνίκ' ἂν δέ με  
 δοκῇτε θυσίας τῆσδ' ἀπηλλάχθαι θεοῖς,  
 πάρεστε· δεῖ γὰρ καὶ πόσει δοῦναι χάριν.  
 [*attendants take away the chariot; CLYTAEMNESTRA goes*  
*toward the cottage*]  
 ΗΛ. [*as CLYTAEMNESTRA is going*] χώρει πένητας ἐς δόμους.  
 [*with covert irony*] φρούρει δέ μοι 660  
 μή σ' αἰθαλώσῃ πολύκαπνον στῆγος πέπλους·  
 [*in a changed voice of stern hatred, as her mother is gone*]  
 θύσεις γὰρ οἷα χρή σε δαίμοσιν θύειν.  
 κανοῦν δ' ἐνῆρκται, καὶ τεθηγμένη σφαγίς,  
 ἥπερ καθεῖλε ταῦρον, οὐ πέλας πεσεῖ  
 πληγεῖσα· νυμφεύσει δὲ κὰν Ἀἰδοῦ δόμοις, 665

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ᾧπερ ξυνηῦδες ἐν φάει· τοσήνδ' ἐγὼ  
δώσω χάριν σοι, σὺ δέ γ' ἐμοὶ δίκην πατρός.

[*She follows her into the cottage.*]

[*The CHORUS then sing an ode, which is interrupted by screams, and suddenly from within comes the piteous appeal of CLYTAEMNESTRA*]

ὦ τέκνα, πρὸς θεῶν μὴ κτάνητε μητέρα.

[*More screams are heard, and then silence. The scene representing the cottage then turns on a pivot (a device called the ἐκκύκλημα), and displays the interior of the chamber, with the dead bodies of AEGISTHUS and CLYTAEMNESTRA, and ORESTES and ELECTRA standing silent and solemn over them.*]

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### NOTES.

#### SCENE 1.

3. *θανυμάζω*, prop. 'to wonder,' here 'to respect.'
4. *πράσσοντα*, 'faring,' its usual sense, and explained by *παθών*, &c.
5. *κατέκτα*, old strong aorist from *κατακτείνω*. The later form is *-έκτανον*. *χῆ* = καὶ ἡ.
6. *μυστηρίων*. The 'secrets' of the god means, of course, the oracular recesses.
9. *νυκτός*, gen. of comprehension, 'in the night.' *νυκτί*, the dat. means 'on the night,' where it is regarded as a point of time; the gen. expresses the whole, *at some period of which* the event happens.
10. *ἀπαρχεσθαι*, prop. 'to begin the sacrifice.' The hair was offered as a first offering. 'I made an offering of my hair.'
11. *μηλείου φόνου*, lit. 'of slaughter of sheep,' i.e. 'of slaughtered sheep.'
13. *πόδα*, a kind of cognate acc. with intrans. *βαίνω*. cf. 328, note.
14. *δυσὶν ἀμύλλαν ξυντιθείς*, 'joining my two-fold effort,' i.e. uniting in one enterprise two aims, viz., to find Electra and so avenge his father, and also to escape easily if discovered (*ἵν' ἐκβάλω*).
15. *ἐκβάλλω*, 'speed out,' intransitive. This usage is frequent with *ἐμβάλλω* and *εἰσβάλλω* and *προσβάλλω*, but very rare with this verb.

The subjunctive is to be noticed, after the historic tense



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ἀφικόμην. The strict sequence would be ἐκβαλοίμην, but as it was the present purpose of the speaker, ἐκβάλω is quite logically correct.

17. *νυν* like *σφε* is accus. of the pronoun, and may be sing. or plur., masc., fem., or neut.
19. *συνέργατιν* [ἐργ- 'work'] 'a help-mate.'
22. *τριβος* [τριβ- tri- (Lat.) 'rub'] 'a path.'
24. *ιστορέω*, 'to enquire.'

### SCENE 2.

27. *ἐφεστίους*, 'close to our house.' *ἐννός*, 'lair,' lit. 'couch.'
28. *λόχου* (λέγ- 'lay,') 'ambush.'
29. *οἶμος*, 'path.'
30. *ἐξάλύωμεν*, subj. in 1 pers. as imper. called Hortative.
31. *τρέσσης*. Observe the usage: in Greek *μή* has *pres. imper.* or *aor. subjunctive*. They said *μή ποίει* or *μή ποιήσης*, but not *μή ποιήσον*.
32. *πίτ-νω*, 'to fall' (stem *πετ-*, nasalized, instead of the common reduplicated form *πίπτω* = *πι-πετ-ω*), hence 'to supplicate.'
33. Notice the double comparative, like 'Most Highest.'
36. *ξιφήρης* [stem *ἄρ-* 'fit'] 'girt with a sword.' *λοχάω*, 28.
37. *i.e.* 'you will agree that I am right in what I do.'
42. *μισθόν*, acc. in apposition to the sentence or act. Like 'Ἐλένην κτάνωμεν Μενελάω λύπην πικράν, where the *λύπη* is the slaughter.
43. *τοῦτο*, the happiness.
45. *συμφορᾶς*, gen. after *ὅπως*, of definition, lit. 'how in the matter of fortune.' It may be called the specifying gen.
46. *ξηρόν*, prop. 'dry,' so 'gaunt,' 'haggard.'
47. *συντήκω* (τακ- 'melt') 'waste away.' *γε*, see note, 72.
48. *σκυθίζω*, 'to treat as a Scythian does;' and as the Scythians

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scalped their slain enemies, this phrase may be rendered,  
'shorn as by Scythian razor.'

49. Lit. 'Does thy brother wound thee?' . . . i.e. 'dost thou grieve for thy brother?'

51. i.e. 'And are not you as dear to him?'

52. 'I must love him from afar, and not close at hand.' i.e.  
'Our love is faithful, but it is the separation I lament.'

53. ἐκ τοῦ, 'from what?' i.e. 'Why?'

58. τηλορός [ῥος, boundary], 'far away,' poet. form of the  
commoner τηλourός.

59. ἄξιος δόμων, 'is a fit dweller in this house.'

62. i.e. 'Women follow their husbands' wishes, not their children's.' So Orestes clearly understands it, for he asks why Aegisthus put this slight upon her. And if so φίλοι must mean 'are friends,' in the sense 'love.'

64. ἀσθενῆ, i.e. τέκνα, children who, being of low birth, should not be able to call him to account. So Orestes explains in his next question.

65. δῆθεν suggests that the motive is that of Aegisthus. It is especially used in this way, often (obviously) ironically, to give not the speaker's view, but the presumed or alleged view of others.

[MSS. here read δῆθε παῖδας, but δῆθε is unknown. If we suppose the text the true reading, it may have been first altered to παῖδας, suggested by plural ἀσθενῆ, and then falsely corrected into the MS. reading for metrical reasons.]

68. ἤρουν, the aorist, where we should use the present. The quick-minded Greek counts a thing past the instant it has been done. cf. φῶμα, 55.

ἀσχρόν γ' εἶπας, i.e. 'it is a shame to doubt him.'

οὐ γὰρ νῦν ἀκμή; 'is it not high time now?' [for him to come and wreak his retribution].

ἀκμή [ἀκ- sharp] 'the point of time,' lit.

## THE ELECTRA OF

72. γε, 'at least,' assents (in conversation) to a question, limiting at the same time or further specifying the assent. So it may be rendered with a 'Yes.' Thus, here; 'Would you slay her?' 'Ay, with the same axe!' τῇ for φ; an archaism. The old article and relative were one.
73. λέγω, deliberative subjunctive, 'may I tell?' This use is well known also in Latin. τὰπὸ σοῦ, 'thy purpose.'
80. ἀρχαῖος, 'in days of old.'
82. ἔκυσεν ὡς ἔκυσεν, a euphemism, to avoid saying the fearful thing. 'He found—what he found.' [cf. O.T. 1376].
84. θυραίων, 'strangers' woes,' [θύρα, 'door']. This momentary forgetfulness of the part he is playing is very skilful.
87. λέγοιμ' ἄν, lit. 'I would speak,' a less obtrusive form of the future, 'I will speak.' (There are several uses of conditional due to Greek delicacy, e.g., χαροῖς ἄν εἶσω for χάρει.)
89. κινεῖς μῦθον, 'move me to speak.'
91. αἰλίζομαι [αἰλή, 'courtyard'] 'to live.'
92. πῖνος, 'filth.' βριθ- 'load.'
94. κερκίς, 'shuttle.' ἐκ δωμάτων, 'after the palace' I once had.
96. φορουμένη, 'fetching home.' This translation gives the reflex force of the Middle.
97. ἀνέορτος [έορτή, 'feast'] ἱπῶν. This is gen. of want, just like χορῶν, especially common with negative adjectives.
98. 'Phrygian spoils' probably means gorgeous cushions and rugs. [Notice the anapaests in proper names in 98, 99.]
100. στατίζουσι, 'are stationed,' a more formal word than ἰστᾶσι.
101. Ἰδαία φάρη . . . 'their Trojan mantles clasped with golden pins.' The accus., as in 'suspensi loculos laevo,' 'os impressa toro,' &c. It is very common in Greek. The participle here may be either *middle* ('having clasped') or the elastic use of the *passive* with the objective accusative.

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103. σέσηπεν, 'is rotting.' The blood will not sink into the ground: for it is murder, and calls for vengeance.
104. πατρί, dat. after ταῦτά, the usual idiom.
106. [γαυρο- 'exult,' γαφ = exultation, joy, cf. gau-deo].
108. κλάω, 'a branch.' [κλάω, 'to break'].
109. χέρος, 'dry,' i.e. barren.
110. μέθη βρεχθείς, 'steeped in drunkenness.'
112. λείω, 'to stone,' [root, λαφ- lap- λιθ- 'stone']. λάϊνος is, of course, from the same.
115. ἀπών, Orestes. ταῦτα is cognate acc. 'such insults does he suffer.'
117. i.e. 'I appeal to you from my voice, heart, hands, grief, and my dead father at once—all these charge you, but only I am the channel.'  
ἐρμηνεύς, 'interpreter.'
119. ξυρῆκες [ξυρόν, 'razor,' ἀκ- 'sharp'], 'shaven,' in mourning.
120. He is degenerate if he can't slay one man, when his father sacked Troy.

## SCENE 3.

128. τὸν ὄντα μῦθον, 'the true tale,' i.e. the real reason.
131. 'To see the light,' a regular Greek phrase for to 'live.'
134. φεύγων, in its technical sense, 'in exile.'
137. τὰ μέν, 'some,' namely, her poverty.
146. ἀκριβές, 'certain,' 'no certain sign.'
147. παραγμὸν, 'confusion;' i.e. all criterions of worth are liable to error. He explains in the next line.
149. τὸ μηδέν, 'a cipher,' 'good for nothing.' 'To be naught' was used exactly in this way in the English of Shakespear.
150. λιμόν, 'famine,' a fine metaphor.
154. ἢ τοῖς ἔχουσι μηδέν; put by a regular Euripidean shifting of phrase for τῷ ἔχειν μηδέν. Thus it would be intelligible,

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though inaccurate, in English to say, 'Can we tell the noble by *those who are poor*,' instead of saying, 'by poverty.'

155. *κακόν*, *adject.* expressing the *result* of the verb; this is called the Proleptic (anticipating) use of the adjective. Thus in English we say, 'I struck him dead.'
156. Strength is no test, any more than wealth.
158. Lit. 'It is best to leave these things alone, undecided.' *εἰκῇ*, lit. 'at random,' 'uncertainly.'
160. *δόκησις*, 'reputation.'
162. *οὐ μὴ ἀφρονήσῃς*, 'will you not cease from folly?'
163. Sense: 'and will ye not judge men by their company, and worth by character,' (not by wealth or birth or externals).
165. *ροιοῦται*, 'the noble.'
167. *ἀγάμαρ* *ἀγορᾶς*, figure heads, as we say; fine externally, but soulless. Lit. 'adornments of the market-place.' *δόρυ μένει*, 'withstands the battle.'  
Even in battle it is courage, not strength, which wins.
170. 'This man's reception within his house.' *τοῦδ' ἀνδρός*, the ordinary gen. of the subject. *δόμων*, the specifying gen.
174. *χαίρειν ἔω*, lit. 'I let it prosper': idiom for 'I pass it by,' 'I care not for it.'

### SCENE 4.

177. *δρθίαν*, 'steep,' for an old man. *ἔχει*, 'it has,' *impers.*
178. *ῥυσφ* [*ῥυ-* draw], 'wrinkled.'
180. *διπλῆν ἄκανθαν*, 'bent spine' [lit. 'doubled'], *ἄκανθα*, lit. 'a thorn,' and therefore embodies the same metaphor as the English word 'spine.'
185. *δάβροχος* [*βρεχ-* 'wet,' same stem as Lat. *rig-* and our 'rain'].
186. 'Have they reminded you' of past horrors.
189. *ἀνόγητα* [*όνε-* 'help,' 'profit'], 'in vain.'

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190. Notice the double augment of ἀνέχομαι.  
τοῦτό γ', 'this,' that I should let him lie there and not do my best for him.
191. πάρεργ' ὁδοῦ, 'by the way.' πάρεργον means prop. 'a secondary business,' and the accus. here is in apposition to the sentence, cf. 42.
194. μυρσίνας, 'myrtle boughs.'
195. οἷς = ὄφεις = ovis. μελάγχμιος πόκερ, 'black in fleece,' the proper offering to the dead. πόκερ dat. of reference.
197. βόστρυχος, 'a curl.'
203. κούριμος, 'shorn,' [κερ-].
204. 'Those that are of one father's blood are wont to resemble each other in most features of their body.'  
φιλεῖ, often used for 'to be wont.'  
ἦ, subjunctive after indefinite οἷς ἄν in primary time.
209. συμφέρομαι, 'agree.'
210. 'The one trained in the manly wrestling-schools, the other combed as a woman's.'
212. ὁμοπτέρους, 'of like hair,' by a natural and pretty metaphor.
214. ἀρβύλη, 'sandal.' These two methods of recognition occur in the Choephoroe of Aeschylus; and this passage, though certainly forced and inappropriate as a sly satire on Aeschylus, is a striking example of Euripides' determined realism.
216. κραταίλεως, 'rugged,' 'rocky.' [κρατ- λαf-].
217. ἔκμακτρον [μακ- 'knead'], 'the print.'
219. Notice ἄρσην for δ ἄρσιν.
223. Lit. 'to which of thy friends does this aged remnant of a man belong;' that is, 'who is it of thy friends.'
227. Notice the irony of εἶπερ ἔστ' ἔτι, said actually to Orestes.
228. 'Looking at the bright stamp of silver,' to see if the coin is genuine.

## THE ELECTRA OF

233. He entreats her to pray to the gods that she may receive the boon. He sees it is Orestes, but touchingly bids her pray first, and prove the reality of the joyful vision after.
243. οὐλή, 'scar.'  
 ἦν . . . ἡμάχθη, 'the wound that he received,' ἦν being really cognate accus.
247. σύμβολον, 'proof,' lit. 'a putting together.' We have the same obvious metaphor in English.
249. ἐξ ἐμοῦ, poet. for 'by me.'
252. βόλος, 'throw,' 'cast,' i.e., the net with the fish inside.

## SCENE 5.

257. ἡλυθες and φονεῖα are rare, but can be illustrated from Eurip., cf. 358.
260. i.e., 'are there any kind friends?'
261. ἀνασκεινάζω, prop. 'to dismantle,' 'destroy,' 'break up.'  
 [So it is specially used of bankrupts in Demosthenes.] Here simply, 'ruined.'
265. εὔρημα [lit. 'a find'], 'a rare thing.'
267. 'Thou art ruined utterly in friends.' φίλοις, dat. of reference.
271. τοῦδε, gen. of aim. ἐξικνεῖσθαι, 'to reach,' i.e., 'hit the mark.'
272. Θυέστου παῖς is Aegisthus.
274. οὐδ' ἄν . . . [λάβοις].
275. κέκασται [stem καθ- obscure root, prob. connected with κεδνός, 'excellent,' and κηδ-] 'excels.' Only in Pf. Pass. A present, καίνυμαι, of different form is found.
276. ἔγνων, 'thou hast guessed.' cf. 55.
278. εἰσῆλθε, 'has occurred to me.'
282. ὠπλίζετο, by natural metaphor, 'he was preparing.'

## EURIPIDES.

284. *οἰκεια χεῖρ*, 'his own attendants.' *χεῖρ*, often so used of assistants, by very natural transference. So *manus* in Latin.
293. *συνίημι*, especially used of understanding *words*, or obscure signs; so of taking a hint or implied sarcasm. Note the participial construction with verbs of knowing; nominative (*οὐσα*) because it refers to the subject of *γινώσκει*.
297. *καὶ μὴν*, (as usual) of a new point. 'Yes, and the other fortune will arrange.'
298. *δοῶν δυοῖν*, 'to us two,' lit. 'being two,' *ῶν* being constantly thus added to *numbers* (*εἰς ῶν*), where in English it is superfluous.
300. *λεχῶ* [*λεχ-*, *λεγ-*, 'lie'], lit. 'a woman in childbirth.' 'Say that I am delivered of a son.'
302. *δέχ'* *ἡλίου*, for after ten days the sacrifice was offered to Artemis the deliverer (*εἰλειθῖα*).
306. *ναί* is an answer to the sense rather than the grammar of the question. 'She does care.'  
*ἀξίωμα*, 'the rank:': it was such a degradation that the blood of the Atridae should mingle with that of a husbandman.
307. 'Again I bring my word to the turning-post,' i.e., again I ask, 'how will that effect her death?'
311. *ἔνθα*, 'where,' relative. The question is contained in the verb understood. 'Must I lead him where . . . ?'
312. *τὰν' ἐμοῦ* [*ἐνί*, not *ἀπό*], lit. 'what is upon me,' i.e., 'my case.'
314. *πρὸςθεν εἰληχας*, 'thou hast drawn the first lot,' i.e., you must first execute your plot.
316. *πέμπω*, 'conduct:': it is used even of carrying a letter, in Iph. Taur., 604 (272 in 'Scenes').
317. *πατρός*, to avenge his father; *τροπαίε*, to punish Aegisthus.
319. Notice the irony.



## THE ELECTRA OF

326. ἀκμή [ἀκ- 'point'], 'tis time,' lit. 'the point of time.'
327. πρὸς τὰδ', lit. 'in view of these things,' = Lat. 'itaque.'  
'And so I bid thee that Aegisthus die.'
328. πτώμα after πεσεῖ, 'fall a deathly fall.' This is called cognate accusative; where the subst. describes the same act as the verb. Cf. 13, 115, 243, &c.
330. ἀμφήκει [ἀμφ- ακ-]. The γάρ is singularly misplaced here. Might we read ΓΑΡΗΙΑΡ for ΚΑΡΑΓΑΡ? Besides, the heart is more natural than the head.
331. 'Make it (ξίφος) ready.'
332. πίστις [πυθ-].
333. The δολυγὴ was the cry of joy, as this shews.
336. πυρσεύω [πῦρ, 'fire'], by fine metaphor ('beacon') 'signal.'
340. ὑπέχειν δίκην, prop. 'to have to give account,' so, 'to submit.'

## SCENE 6.

342. δοκά, 'a fancy' [δοκ-].
344. πνεύματα, 'blasts,' by natural metaphor, of the shouting and tumult.
345. ἀμειψον, lit. 'change,' i.e., 'pass,' 'leave,' 'come out.'
346. 'How have we progressed in our contest?' i.e., 'how is our plot going on?' For gen. cf. 45.
349. ἐμφανὲς γε μὴν, lit. 'clear, at least, however,' i.e., 'but yet clear.' So γε μέντοι, γε μὲν δὴ are used.
350. Ἀργεῖος, delicately, to avoid mentioning Aegisthus' name.
351. μέλος, 'strain.'
352. σφαγὴν, &c., 'This thy tidings is death to me,' i.e., 'I must slay myself,' as she vowed, 338. σφαγὴν is the predicate to which τήνδε is attracted.
353. τρανῶς, 'clearly' [prob. from τρα-, 'pierce'].
355. φαῦλον, 'light,' 'easy.'

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358. [φονεᾶ, 258.]
362. δυσ-γνωσί-α, 'difficulty of recognising.' 'I was slow to know.'
366. ἤλθεις ποτε, 'thou hast come at last.' For the Greek tendency to the aorist if the thing is the least past, cf. 55, &c. See Index.
367. ῥυθμὸς [ῥυ-, flow], 'course.'
370. δίκροτος ἀμαξιτός. 'a chariot-road of double track,' i.e., for two cars. ἤμην [not ἦμεν, 385], from εἶμι, ibo.
372. βεβῶς, 'walking,' part. (as usual) expressing *present state*.
373. δρέπω, 'pluck' [δρεπ-δραχ- grip, all the same stem].  
τέρην, 'soft' [τερ- 'rub'].
381. ἑῷ, 'in the morning.'
382. ἐς ταὐτόν, 'to the same place,' i.e., to the river Alpheus, 376.
387. χερ-νιβ-ες [hand-wash], 'the lustral water.' But they had to be purified first by washing, cf. Iph. T. 1190-1.
391. ἔτοιμος, constantly without εἰμί, Aj. 813, O. T. 92.
392. ἐκ μέσου, 'in private,' like ἐν μέσῳ, 'in public.'
395. σφαγέιον, 'vessel for blood.' κανὺν, 'basket,' for meat, knife, &c.
397. λίβης, 'pot,' for boiling water.
398. προχύται [κριθαί], also called οὐλαί, the bruised barley sprinkled (with salt, mola salsa) on the victim's head before sacrifice.
400. βουθυτεῖν (Grant me) to . . . the regular infinitive of prayer.
402. ὥς νῦν; he means 'well.' But there is skilful irony in the unconscious words, with the avenger close at hand.
404. γεγωνίσκων, 'uttering aloud' [supposed to be onomatop (i.e., formed from sound), from γω, exclamation, HO !].

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406. *ὀρθήν*, 'straight' (not curved).  
The process of sacrifice is told here with unusual fullness. The sacrificer wore a garland (373), purified himself and his assistants (386), then washed his hands with holy water (387), sprinkled the victim's head and altar with salt-meal (399), cut off a lock from its forehead [called also *κατάρχεσθαι*] (406), threw it into the fire (407), drew back its head and cut the throat (408), flayed and dissected it (419—421).
410. *ἐκ τῶν καλῶν . . . εἶναι τὸδ'*, 'that this is one of their distinctions.' After this one expects infin. *ἀρταμεῖν*. But the change to the indefinite, *δοῖς ἀρταμεῖ*, is natural and common. Iph. Taur. 616.
411. *ἀρταμέω*, 'cut up' [deriv. unknown].
412. *ὀχμάζω*, 'curb' [lit. 'hold fast,' *ἐχ-*].
413. *ἔνυμος*, like *ἐτεός*, *ἐτήνυμος*, *ἐξ-ετάζω*, from old stem SAT, whence old English 'sooth.'
414. *Δωρίδα*, i.e., *κοπίδα*, 432, 'a Doric' knife. The use of *local* adjectives as substantives is immensely common, cf. magnet, bayonet, cambric, damask, arras, gauze, sherry, port, quince, guinea, diaper, ermine, &c. (cf. Trench on "Study of Words," 122).
415. *πόρπαμα*, 'a clasped robe,' *πορπη* [*πέρ-* pierce], 'buckle.'
420. *δίαιλος* was the double lap of the race-course. (*ἑπταίους*, because usually only horses raced *twice* over it). [From *αἰλός*, 'pipe' = 'double channel.'] *δήνυσε*, aorist of *hábit*, 'accomplishes.'
421. *ἱρά*, 'the victim,' to see the omens. *ἀνείρο*, lit. 'relaxed,' i.e., 'flayed,' 'stripped.'
- 422, sqq. *λόβος*, 'lobe' of the liver, whose absence was a fatal sign. *πύλαι*, the *portal* vein, leading to the gall-bladder, *δοχαί χολῆς*.

## EURIPIDES.

424. προσβολάς, 'attack.'
425. σκυθράζω, 'to look dark' [σκυ- σκι- shadow]. δεσπότης is, of course, Orestes.
426. Aegisthus answers, ὕρῳδῶ . . . [Lat. horreo]. τί χρῆμ', 'why?'
430. πευστηρίαν [θοίνην, cognate acc.], θοινασόμεσθα, 'to feast—a feast of sacrificial inquiry' [πυθ-] seems the meaning: i.e., to complete the sacrifice by fully examining the entrails, and so learning the gods' will.  
ὅπως, with fut. is constantly nearly a final; here, as Ran. 1121, it is quite so.
431. Φθιάδα, from Phthia, S.E. of Thessaly, whence they professed to come, 376.
432. χέλυς [lit. 'tortoise' (cf. chelys, lyre made from shell); so from its shape], 'the chest.'
436. σφονδύλους, joints of the back-bone.
438. ἀσπαίρω, 'be convulsed,' σφαδάζω 'writhe,' both from stem σπα- cf. 'spasm.'  
[ἐσφάδαζε is Valckenaer's bold correction of ἡλάλαζε, only used of joyful cries, 450.]
440. μάχεσθαι inf. after πολλοί.
441. ἀντίπρῳρα, 'face to face,' 'before their faces.'
443. ὀπάων [ἐπ- 'follow'], 'attendants.'
447. κάμακες, prop., 'poles,' so 'spears.'
452. αἶμα, &c. 'And to the dead man now  
Blood has been paid for blood, a bitter debt.'  
δανεισμός is properly 'the loan.' The idea is of the loan coming back in the form of repayment.

## SCENE 7.

456. ἄνθημα [ἀνα-δέω], 'band' or 'circlet.'
457. ἑκπλεθρος. 6 plethra = 200 yards.

## THE ELECTRA OF

460. παρασπιστής [*δόσις*], 'comrade in war.'
468. ὥς δέ τῳ . . . 'and that we may put before anyone, clearly to know this,' lit., i.e., 'and to give clear proof of this.'  
[Paley's explanation of MSS. is perverse. *σαφ'* εἰδέναι must be *result of proof*, not of mere statement.]
471. σκῦλον, 'spoil.'
472. σκόλονψ, 'stake.'
475. τί χρῆμα; 'what' art thou ashamed to say? And the answer is ὑβρίζειν, clearly therefore alluding, not to Orestes' proposed treatment of the corpse, but to the desire for liberating her soul against Aegisthus by vindictive speech.
476. φθόνος. First 'envy,' 'jealousy.' Then it is used to describe the peculiar feeling of 'jealousy' supposed by Greeks to be felt by gods against those who were over-fortunate [cf. Polykrates] or those who misused their good luck. So the fear of this φθόνος would lead a person not to triumph over the fallen, as here. So Demosthenes uses it (327, 13) as deterring him from praising himself even as much as facts justify him in doing.
- Here (as *τις* means men, not gods, cf. next line) the same feeling is extended to men, as naturally sympathising with the judgment of the gods.
478. ἀρες- 'please.' ψεγ- 'blame.'
479. ἄσπονδος [*σπονδαί*, 'a truce' (lit. 'libations')], 'implacable.'
483. καὶ μὴν . . . γε, 'and yet truly.'  
λιμπάνω, other method of strengthening stem (λιπ-) instead of the common λείπω. Cf. φνγγάνω, φεύγω.
492. ἐς τοῦτο ἀμαθίας, 'to such a pitch of folly.'
494. ἐς σέ μὲν δη. You trusted the faith of a woman whose very faith to you was unfaithfulness to another! A fine sentiment, developed in the next four lines.
496. ἐκεῖ, towards her real husband. of is the reflexive personal.

## EURIPIDES.

499. 'Most wretched was thy life, tho' men knew it not.'
503. *ὁ τῆς γυναικός*. As the French say of a man eclipsed by his wife, 'le mari de sa femme.'
508. *ἐπίσημα*, 'noble.' *μείζω*, 'above him' in rank.
509. *οὐδεὶς λόγος*, 'there is no talk of,' i.e., he is of no account.
511. *τις εἶναι*, as we say, 'to be somebody.'
512. 'But they are nought, except to enjoy for a short while.'
515. *μετὰ σκαιῶν*, 'with evil men.'
516. Cf. 420.
517. *οὐδὲν εἰδώς*, for he is a lifeless corpse. [Paley has missed this.]
519. *βῆμα*, 'stage.'
521. *γραμμή*, 'the line' from which the race started and to which (as here) it returned.  
The best instance of this well-known Greek sentiment is the end of Oedip. Tyrannus.
524. I have taken *μή σφ' ἴδῃ* (Seidler) for the awkward though possible *μή εἰσίδῃ*.
525. i.e. 'let us try some other means.'
529. *λαμπρύνεται*, 'she comes in state.' *λαμπρός*, 'bright.'
535. *ἦ* indef. subj. without *ἄν* attached to *ᾖ*πον, as is usual.
536. *χράω*, 'to give an oracle.'
539. *μή ἀμύνων* contains a condition: 'if thou dost not aid thy father.'
541. *οὐ πεσεῖ* would be 'wilt thou not fall' = 'fall.'  
So *οὐ μή πεσεῖ*, 'wilt thou not refrain from falling' = 'don't fall.'  
This is entirely different from the elliptical *οὐ μή* with the subjunctive. Cf. 162.
542. 'Shall I set the same snare for her?' *ὑποστήσω* may be fut. or delib. subj.
544. *πρόβλημα*, 'a task.'
546. *χῆδύ* = καὶ ἡδύ.

## THE ELECTRA OF

### SCENE 8.

547. ἀπήνη, 'chariot.'
551. ἐξαίρετα, 'chosen spoils' which the king took.  
παῖδος ἣν ἀπώλεσα is Iphigenia who was sacrificed to the expedition.
555. The position of μακαρίας is unusual. It is outside the article and yet not a predicate. It seems possible (from one or two instances, Cho. 487, Orest 86, though both are doubtful) that this transposition was occasionally allowed in formal addresses, like the old English 'good my lord:' or possibly μακαρίας agrees with σοῦ understood from σῆς, like τὰμὰ δυστήνου ἀνδρά.
557. Electra's bitter answer is most telling. Clyt. repulses her filial offer by a cold 'Thank you, don't trouble: I have slaves.' Electra replies, 'Slaves? I am a slave too, out-cast and orphan.'
560. 'Yet such was the cruelty of Agamemnon to Iphigenia.'
562. Sense: if it had been to save his city or other children [as Erechtheus sacrificed a daughter], it would have been excusable; but it was done for a frail woman and a feeble man.
565. μάργος, 'passionate,' 'weak.'
568. She puts a parallel case, with the sexes changed; and the absurdity of it is the measure of the injustice to women which prevails. 'For I (she thinks) should have been justly killed if I had done so; why not he?'
571. Ordex: εἶτα οὐ χρῆν τὸν μὲν (Agamemnon), κτείναντα τὰμὰ θανεῖν.
573. 'I turned that way (ὁδόν), by which alone it was passable, namely, to his foes.' ἤνπερ is cognate acc.
576. ἀντίθετος, i.e., 'refute.' Lit. 'set [your arguments] against [mine].'

# EURIPIDES.

578. 'Just: but a wise [*φρενήρης*-*ἀρ*- 'fit,' lit. 'fitted with sense'] woman will not press for her rights.'
581. οὐδ' *εἰς ἀριθμὸν* . . . λόγων, lit. 'she does not even enter into the count of my words,' i.e., 'I cannot take account of her.'
587. *φέρει*, as MSS., in spite of Porson's emendation, *φέρω*.  
*ἄξιον*, 'fit' praise [not ironical, as Paley]; but beauty is not all, and in character she and Helen were 'true sisters, both light women,' as Electra says.
592. *σκῆψις*, 'a pretext,' [lit. 'thing on which you lean.' Cf. *σκῆπτρον*].
593. 'They don't know you as I do.' [I have taken Porson's *ἴσασι σ' εἶ* for MSS., *ἴσασιν εἶ*. The acc. is necessary].
595. *νέον*, adv. 'recently.' Her husband gone, and her daughter sentenced to death, she occupies herself with—dressing her hair.
596. *ξανθόν*, 'yellow,' *κάτοπτρον*, 'a mirror.'
598. *ἐς κάλλος*, 'for beauty,' i.e., to look beautiful.  
*διάγραφε*, 'cancel,' 'cross out,' a fine word. She means, 'strike her off the list' as a bad woman.
602. *εἰ . . . εὐτυχοῖ*, 'if ever . . . were fortunate,' equivalent to indefinite 'whenever,' as in all languages is possible and is common in Greek.
603. *ἥσσανα*, 'worsted.' Cf. *ἥσσασθαι*.
605. *παρεῖχε* impers., 'it offered,' 'there was a chance.'  
[so used absol. *καλῶς παρασχόν*. Thuc. 5, 14, &c.]  
*σωφρονεῖν* (in its original sense of 'self-restraint') 'to be pure.'
610. *τὰ γὰρ κακά* . . . *ἔχει*. Lit. 'Vice gives to virtue an example and a spectacle.' The meaning seems clear, though (as so often in Eurip.) the expression is a little confused. She means that an exposure of vice makes men study virtue, and point to it as an example.



## THE ELECTRA OF

- 611, sqq. The argument is: Even granted that Ag. had wronged you, why did not you content yourself with slaying him, and then give us our inheritance? Instead of this, you sold our portion to Aegisthus as the wages of sin.
614. *προσάπτω* (lit. 'to attach'), 'to bestow.'  
*ἀποφέρεσθαι*, 'to gain,' with prop. mid. sense, 'to carry off for one's self.'
616. *ἀντιφεύγει*, 'is an exile in place of.'
618. *ἀδελφῆς*, gen. of comparison after *δις τόσως*.  
 She was 'twice as much slain as her sister,' because her honour was wounded by her marriage.
622. *ἢ εἰς*, run into one syllable like *μὴ οὐ* and *μὴ εἰς*- in 524 [if we adopt the MSS. reading].
624. 'Better than a rich marriage is a lowly one, if pure.'
625. *πέφυκας*, c. inf., 'it is thy nature.' [Trach. 440.]
626. *ἔστιν δὲ καὶ τόδ'*, 'this too is found.' *εἰσὶν ἀσέβων*, 'take the side of the men' in the family.
629. *ἐμοί*, dat. of agent after pf. pass. as usual. The perfect suggests so much more the effect remaining (*for* the person) than the act done (*by* the person), that the Recipient Dative is the most natural case to use.
630. *πεπαυμένη*, 'recovered' from thy birth pangs.
636. *κομίζεσθαι* [to bring for one's self, 614], 'fetch home.'
639. *ἄγριον*, 'fierce.' Sense: Why have you not mollified him towards me?
640. *τρόποι*, 'his character.'  
*αἰθάδης* [*αἰτός*, and *ἀδ-* stem *σφάδ-* *suavis*, 'sweet'], 'self-willed.'
642. *καὶ μὲν* (297). Assuring, 'and indeed.'
646. *οἶδα*, sc. *θύσαι*, 'know how to sacrifice.' She explains,  
 648.

## EURIPIDES.

647. *δεκάτη*, 302.
648. *τριβων* [root *τριβ-* 'rub'], 'practised.'
650. *βρέφος*, 'child.'
651. *ἰδρύω*, 'to settle' [root *ἰδ-* *sed-*]. It is regularly used in the passive, as here, with acc. probably cognate.  
*φίλων*, gen. of want, after negative *ἀγείροναι*.
653. *ἀριθμόν*, 'to sacrifice (in honour of) the accomplished number of days,' probably *nine*, as Paley suggests; and so the tenth was the day of sacrifice. The acc. is again cognate.
657. *φάτναις*, 'the manger,' 'stable.' *ἄχους* is here used for the horses chiefly.
660. *μοι*, Ethical Dative, 'I beg.'
661. *αἰθαλώω*, 'soil,' 'blacken.' [*αἰθ-* 'burn,' *αἰθήρ*, *Αἰθλοψ*, *Αἴτην*, *aestus*, &c.]
663. *ἐνάρχεσθαι κανοῦν* is 'to begin the offering by taking the barley (406 n.) from the basket.' Translate 'The sacrifice is begun, the blade is whetted.'
664. *ταῦρον* is *Aegisthus*.



## THE ELECTRA OF EURIPIDES.

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